The Commonweal

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts and Public Affairs

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THE COURT RULES ON ITSELF

IT IS far too soon after the astounding events of April 12—which will leave their mark on the pages of American history because of their high importance in connection with our nation's most vital problems—to sum up their probable effects with complete confidence in the accuracy of the opinions expressed. That is, unless you happen to be a member of one or the other of what might be termed the extreme Right Wing, or the extreme Left Wing of the many, and highly various groups of citizens who are interested, and concerned, in the current controversy over the Supreme Court.

The extreme Right Wing are those who push a proper respect for, and belief in, the great and truly essential part which the Supreme Court plays in our triple form of government—the legislative, the executive, and the judicial—which, theoretically, and in a rough and ready fashion, actually form a more or less harmonious unity of fundamental functions in our democratic government.

But the extreme Right Wing of this, the large majority of American citizens, really push their respect for and reasonable belief in the Supreme Court into a curious sort of quasi-religious fervor, a sort of idolatry. To them the Court cannot only not go wrong: it is impeccably, consistently, necessarily, always in the right in all its decisions. In short, to them the Court is an infallible institution; more completely infallible in the wide region of American law, which therefore means also American economic and social affairs, than the Pope and the General Councils of the Catholic Church—for the latter only claim infallibility in a purely spiritual sense that is strictly and narrowly limited in comparison with the sweeping and inclusive and actual sense claimed for the Supreme Court by its more ardent devotees—and, perhaps, by a few of its own members.

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This paper recently received a letter from a most eminent lawyer, rebuking it for what the lawyer considered its national impiety in supporting President Roosevelt's mild and eminently sensible proposals for making the Court a better-balanced and more representative organ of the nation's developing life, without in the least impairing the just authority of the Court, or tampering with the Constitution from which it derives its proper powers. The lawyer said that there were certain moral principles which ought to be unquestionable, and should never degenerate into mere opinions: and that the power of the Supreme Court, just as it stands, just as it has stood for so long, was unquestionably a fundamental moral principle. We begged to differ from this view.

The Left Wing of public opinion about the Court, of course, is expressed by that small and vociferous, but not really influential group, which thinks that the powers of the Court should be most drastically limited, and would place it almost directly under the power of the legislature.

But that view, we think, has small chance of ever prevailing: middle-of-the-road Americans, Americans with a guiding instinct drawn from their knowledge of the great traditions of this nation, are not going to monkey with the genuine authority, and the most desirable powers, of the Supreme Court, particularly in its admirable relation to American liberty and democracy through its guardianship of the Bill of Rights.

Now, in the present situation, in the turmoil of mingled satisfaction, wonder and utter surprise, caused by the sweeping, complete upholding of the Wagner Labor Law, the Right Wing has no choice, of course (according to the logic of their own attitude), but to hail the decisions—in spite of the five-to-four nature of most of the decisions—as unalterable and wholly admirable: the words of absolute authority, to be obeyed and enforced without question and without delay. Which will be sour stuff for some, at least, of the Right-wingers to swallow; for we suppose that a goodly number of them had no doubt, no possible doubt, no shadow of doubt whatever, that their own private opinions as to the inherent unconstitutionality of the Wagner Act (confirmed by the premature utterances of so many eminent counsel for several great corporations, and by the late Liberty League pundits), would, of course, be confirmed by the Court.

However, neither Right nor Left Wing may claim comfort or sustenance for their peculiar views from these decisions. The Court itself is again reestablished in the confidence of the great public which asks for nothing better than a practical, workable, reasonably progressive Supreme Court, holding the balance of power between the legislative and the executive branches of the government, and capable, when really tested by the full and frank expression of informed public opinion, of satisfying the just expectations of the nation that its economic and social system shall neither be allowed to ossify in outworn habits, nor be placed at the dubious will of rash and reckless experimenters. Still less do such Americans desire that determined minorities or individuals, striving to overturn the traditional and established institutions of the United States in order to set up something imitated from Russian, or German, or Fabian collectivization and bureaucratic regimentation, shall be allowed to fool with the Court.

Free Americans, and they are still the predominant, the determining factor of our nation, both in numbers, and in the justice and true humanism of their desires, will always make short work of disposing of such extremists, once these free Americans—the "middle Americans" they might be called: the Americans neither of the Right Wing nor of the Left, but the Americans of the true center of our life, who preserve its balance and its proportions—awaken to the danger of permitting such extremists too much power. But it is equally certain, we firmly believe, that the free Americans—the "middle Americans," the Americans who know in their very bones that only upon private, but well-distributed private property may their liberties and their opportunities to live full, integrated lives, both as citizens and as individuals, be safely based, and preserved—do not desire that the great Court shall be controlled by stubborn Bourbons. True conservatism is a living, a developing force.

The fact that the fateful decisions came because one member of the Court seems, in the highest and most honest sense of the sometimes ambiguous phrase, to have "changed his mind," will be scoffed at by the Left-wingers, and perhaps be dubiously regarded by many of the Right Wing. But, again, the common sense of the great mass of free Americans, the middle-of-the-road Americans, will recognize the fact for what it truly is, namely, a welcome and healthy proof of human wisdom, human flexibility, human responsibility to changing situations, possessed by members of the Court. For what sensible man is not ready to "change his mind," if and when that mind has been convinced by study or the examination of points of view not before known to it, that it has been wrong, or ill advised, and that as a matter of conscience it is a duty to abandon an old position and frankly and openly to adopt a new one? It is, no doubt, risky to have the Court so small in numbers, or so strongly inclined, at any time, toward any particular form of political or economic or social philosophy, that it may scandalize the injudicious by determining vital problems by too many five-to-four decisions—which is another point in favor of the President's

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proposals. But the main thing is that the Court is not ossified, nor stubborn, nor irrevocably committed to one point of view. It has spoken: and collective bargaining is firmly founded upon American law, finally determined.

In effect, therefore, so we think, the Supreme Court has ruled, unconsciously, and simply in pursuance of its high duty, on its own place in American society: and we think that the American public will accept the verdict gladly. The Court is still one of the three indispensable agencies of the popular will, but it is not superior to the others. It knows its place: its place as the balancing instrument, the criterion of our fundamental law. And in that place it is safe, and, therefore, so is the nation.

Week by Week

MR. ROOSEVELT'S relief bill was anxiously awaited. Though it seems likely that the measure will be engrossing Congress before the Supreme Court issue is settled, and possibly before the implications of the constitutionality of the Wagner Act have been realized, there is little doubt that the question of what is to be done for unemployment will take precedence over all else. For as the situation is now, emergency conditions are persisting into a period of relative stability. If the financial burden of the national government is not reduced, continuous borrowing will be required. But that is no longer possible at very low interest rates; and therewith the outlook for increased costs becomes very considerably darker. Two measures would then be available: either much higher taxes, or a recourse to cheaper money. Mr. Roosevelt has indicated that he favors neither course. Nevertheless it is hard to see how the burden can be shifted to the states and the municipalities, very especially since relief has now been so widely identified with political influence. The load being carried by the great majority of towns and cities is already demonstrably hampering the normal development of education, hospitalization and other civic enterprises. Nearly everyone feels that the transfer of unemployed persons to private industry could be expedited, but nobody is willing to assume responsibility for the somewhat drastic measures which alone could do the work. It is an exceedingly momentous question, therefore, which the President will discuss with Congress, and his counsel will be awaited with the deepest interest. In a great number of communities, small and large alike, discussion of the relief question has grown intense during past weeks. This is not a consequence of political feeling or even the result of publicity. It follows upon a growing awareness that indebtedness is mounting without a clear assurance of improvement.

The Trend of Events

IN BELGIUM one of the most remarkable political campaigns of recent history has led to a triumph over Léon Degrelle and his Rexists which few observers, including our humble selves, would have predicted. Leading a kind of "popular front" which had the approval of the King and the Cardinal Primate, Premier Van Zeeland all but wiped the aspirant to dictatorial honors off the map. It is the most resounding victory which has been gained by advocates of Christian democracy during recent years, and in addition it will serve as an object lesson to Catholics in particular. Degrelle seems to be a very fine person in private life, and to be inspired by genuine zeal for what he believes is the mission of the Church. Nevertheless, the sole effect his stand could have was the fatal division of Catholics living under a "liberal" constitutional monarchy into two warring and mutually destructive groups. His policy of dictatorship and violence appeals to something innate in many troubled hearts, which are led by the impact of events to believe that only a power strong enough to crush opposition can produce order in the world. But of course opposition cannot be disposed of that way, even if the ethics involved were considerably less dubious than they are. At all events, the situation in Belgium is not guaranteed against future disturbances, naturally, but is at least much more reassuring than was the case even a week ago. We think the Cardinal Primate set an example of insight and courage. Nor can one forget to compare the attitude of King Leopold with that of President Von Hindenburg, whose failure to stand fast in a moment of crisis led to all the trouble that has followed.

The Catholic Appeal

ONCE again Catholic Charities of the New York Archdiocese has made its appeal for donations. We have no doubt that they will be made, generously and cheerfully, as in the past. Even in the very darkest times of the depression, people did not fail to set aside money to help their Church care for the unfortunate. Today, when there are so many signs of improvement, it seems even more anomalous that some of us should be the victims of dire poverty and need. Government agencies will never do all the work that needs to be done. One has only to glance at the long list of enterprises in which Catholic Charities are engaged—care of the aged and of youth, family welfare and vacation camps, educational activities and settlement—in order to realize how much that benefits the community deeply and permanently could forever remain undone had Cardinal Hayes not taken the

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initiative in building up this great work. More than ever this year the secular press seems to be calling attention to the lives of the hundreds of Sisters and other workers in this vast city who quietly and joyously spend their days in ministering to those in need. Yet quite apart from the results, comparable though they are to the very finest social achievements of our time, there is the value of giving. A democracy is safe against inner and outer foes so long as the Christians who live under its protection realize Whom they are following. For the ideal which inspires every true democracy is self-reliance, not in the banal sense of every man for himself but in the immemoriably fine sense of every man for everybody. And it is doubtless just as correct to say that this is also the true democracy of the Church, wherein at the beginning the Master washed the feet of His underlings. No poor man is too bedraggled, no outcast is too hopeless, to dry up in the Christian heart the urge to spend all in the safe knowledge that a cup of cold water may be the key to the Kingdom of Heaven.

With Our Compliments

TO PRESIDENT NICHOLAS MURRAY BUTLER we extend, somewhat belatedly, our sincere congratulations on a seventy-fifth birthday which is also a milestone on a long road of service to academic life and to the nation. He has been a spokesman for conservative liberalism upon many a difficult occasion; and one does not know whether to stress admiration for the tact with which he has faced trying problems or to emphasize his ability to sponsor sound constructive ideas. Columbia has reflected his spirit; it is a great forum for the discussion and investigation of the world in which we live, but it has not been a platform for mere ranters. You can find exponents of almost every point of view, but you are relatively sure that most of the solons are entitled to a point of view. President Butler has tried loyally to find a place for religion, too. Columbia is not without a group of professors deeply imbued with the values of the Catholic and Protestant faiths. Above and beyond all this, one senses a desire to meet the major criticism of universities, that they are out of touch with life and of no direct value to society. He has encouraged the scholar to take his place in the world of affairs, and the results have on the whole been good. At the same time he has not made this service the only standard of excellence. The pure scientist, the meditative delver into learning for learning's sake, have been rendered safe from alarums that distract from one of the oldest and best purposes of the race. President Butler himself has not shirked the perils of concern with national and world affairs. Few men of his generation have been interested so intelligently in so many things.

Working Out a Technique

IN THE practical conduct of a democracy, it is perhaps well that certain general questions should be only tentatively answered. A large minimum of working agreement is of course necessary as a base for any procedure at all, but beyond that, to adapt the old French phrase, many democratic situations are undoubtedly saved by not being defined. The question of the amount of authority parents may and should exercise over the schools in their communities, especially the public schools, probably belongs in this category. But while it may be admitted in the abstract that the intellectual background and the educational understanding of adults in general vary so sharply throughout the country as to make their habitual interference with schools undesirable, in the concrete there is evidence that they interfere too little—that they hardly interfere at all, in fact. For that reason, among many others, the recent happenings at Roslyn, Long Island, will attract interested attention from a very wide audience. It may be remembered that a few months ago, the parents of this progressive community in large numbers signed a petition requesting that the Roslyn grade school abandon what the signers considered its excessive experimenting and return to the teaching of the three R's.

THE MATTER is being threshed out at the present moment, because of the visit to Roslyn of the state commissioner of elementary education. The procedure has included conferences with the parents, and the statements make heartening reading, for they evidently come from a sensible, well-educated group of men and women, who have a clearly formulated educational ideal and mean their children to profit by it. There is nothing in the least reactionary or ignorant in the protests against lack of constructive discipline and lack of proper academic training, and against that type of "facts-of-life" teachings which thrusts sex into the child's consciousness years before the child himself gets around to it. It is not necessary or desirable to view this episode as a battle in which one side wins a victory and the other side is defeated. It should rather be considered a precedent, showing the way to constructive cooperation between parents and teachers. For as there is testimony that the Roslyn school authorities effected a considerable alteration in their methods even in response to the parents' first protest, there is no reason to doubt that a balance can gradually be worked out in many other communities between sound academic and sound domestic ideals.

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CASUAL OBSERVATIONS ON MEXICO

By RICHARD PATTEE

Asserting that there are "hopeful signs" in Mexico, Mr. Pattee analyzes the existing situation on the basis of a recent study. He draws an interesting parallel with Germany. There the government has attempted to justify Jew baiting with arguments curiously similar to those which Mexican politicians use in pointing to "the preponderance of the Church in the ownership of lands, the control of public instruction and the like." This point, he feels, will not delight the "vanguardists" but deserves attention.—The Editors.

NEWS reports of recent demonstrations of Catholic fervor in Vera Cruz state, and the opening of churches in other states of Mexico, brings to the forefront once again this vexing question which has dragged on these many years with occasional lulls and recurrent periods of intensity, but with no tangible evidence of solution. The Church-State controversy in the neighboring republic has long since been analyzed in its historical perspective by the brilliant and scholarly pens of Father Wilfrid Parsons, Bishop Kelley and a host of other Catholic and non-Catholic observers. The points at issue have been summed up, the controversy fitted into the background of Mexican history and a balance sheet drawn up of the stalemate in which both interests find themselves today.

It is becoming increasingly clear that a complete victory for either side is neither possible nor probable. The Mexican state has created in the course of the years since 1910 the elements of solidarity and solidity which assure it a fair degree of permanency. The vast labor organizations of Leftist tendencies have become consolidated. The iron hand of one-party dictatorship controls and determines the policies of the Mexican government. The Church on the other hand has waged a steady and consistent fight for the essential liberties of creed. It has won in devotion and fervor what may have been lost in privilege. It is dubious that the official propagandizing along Socialist lines has affected the basic Catholicism of the rank and file of Mexicans. Acquaintance with the present-day leaders of Catholic thought in Mexico, both law and cleric, is encouraging. There is no fear of eventual defeat, no pessimism that the Catholic masses will be permanently won away, nor even the belief that a missionary crusade will have to be undertaken to reconvert them. Those who have left the Church in Mexico in her hour of need are perhaps the weak at heart and the fearful in spirit. For many Catholics, the period of trial through which they are passing has deepened religious conviction and pious practise. Persecution has vitalized Catholic living in Mexico. Persecution? Of course the State denies its existence. The sophistry which is employed to argue this fact out of existence is curious. The Constitution of the republic limits and restricts the Church. The action of the State relative to the Church is no more than faithful compliance with the fundamental law of the land. The State merely enforces the dictates of the Constitution with no eye to persecution. Let the Church obey that law and the reason for oppressive action vanishes. This odd bit of reasoning naturally ignores the real issue at stake, which is the reason for being of the constitutional precepts which have inspired the persecution. No less an observer than the keen Frenchman, André Siegfried, writing in the columns of *L'Amérique Latine* of Paris asserts that whatever the term employed or whatever the attenuating circumstances may be, the very plain and obvious truth of the matter is that persecution is going on in Mexico. The word may be avoided, distorted or suppressed but the fact remains that government action against religious liberty is a reality. The difference lies in the situation of a majority suffering this persecution rather than a minority. So accustomed are we to think of minorities in the position of the persecuted that it seems illogical to reverse the process. The persecution in the case of Mexico is being carried out in the name of doctrinaire Leftism with the same persistence and disrespect for the opinions of the persecuted as under Nazism, Czarism, Mussolini totalitarianism, or orthodox Stalinism.

There is, in truth, a rather striking analogy between the Mexican situation and that of Nazi Germany. Admirers of vanguardism will naturally express horror at the blasphemy of such a comparison. The present German government alleges as the reason for a justification of its policy of Jew baiting, the predominance of this race in high places, in finance, in public administration, in the arts and the theatre and in education. The Mexican government asserts the preponderance of the Church in the ownership of lands, the control of public instruction and the like. Both accusations are in part quite true. Whether the conclusion at which both governments have arrived flows logically from these premises is precisely the crux of the whole matter. The spectacle of Jews in exile, banished to foreign lands, persecuted and browbeaten within the Reich, threatened and hounded out of the pro-

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fessions and finally submerged into an inarticulate oppressed sector of the population is repeated in a slightly different way in Mexico. Catholic exiles are to be found everywhere. Catholics in hiding within Mexico are common. Catholics removed from posts of responsibility, forced into virtual ostracism within their own land and Catholic priests forced to employ clandestine methods for the fulfilment of their mission—are all spectacles which are constantly present in the Mexico of today. Mexico and Germany both strive to nationalize the vital forces within their boundaries. Both practise the methods of ruthless repression of opposition opinion. Both resort to methods of violence and coercion to secure a solid and substantial public opinion for their acts. The Jew, *voilá l'ennemi* in Nazi Germany; the Catholic, there is the enemy in Socialist Mexico. The analogy is not absolutely exact. It does not pretend to be more than suggestive.

It is unnecessary to recount the vicissitudes through which the Church in Mexico has passed and is passing. The restrictions of the 1917 Constitution, the rigid supervision of the clergy, the reduction of the number of priests allowed to labor among the Catholics of all Mexico to less than 200, the strict regulation of property and instruction, constitute other phases of this same policy. Naturally 200 priests for the millions of Mexican Catholics is a ludicrously small number. Can the Church, deprived of the opportunity of instructing the rising generations, manage to perpetuate itself? The Church in Mexico has every right except the right of self-preservation.

An attitude which is fairly common is that the Church today is merely reaping the fruits of past sins. The negligence and lethargy of centuries is now manifest in the toppling of the Church from its pinnacle of privilege. Here too much juggling of statistics, much gratuitous accusation is thrown about with a scanty factual basis. That reform was necessary in Mexico admits of no doubt. The landlessness of the masses, the dire necessity of the Indian population, the distress and privation of the workers in contrast with the opulence of the privileged class, were evils which cried out for reform. An agrarian policy aimed at the more equitable distribution of lands was urgent. If Mexico was to survive as a nation, the Indian masses could no longer be isolated from the national life. In many respects the Church had fallen into easy ways. There was, to be sure, corruption, and ignorance even in clerical circles. The laity was often uninstructed, Catholic through routine and tradition. Catholic Action as we understand it in the United States and as it is practiced in Belgium was utterly unknown in Mexico. Vital social needs did not fall, generally speaking, within the scope of Church action.

The average Catholic of course asks himself why it is necessary to wear red shirts, shoot priests and announce that man created God and not God man in order to bring about a decent degree of social justice. The question is absolutely pertinent. The violent and drastic policy of the State has alienated millions and wrought untold harm to the realization of the projected reforms. The observations of Father Parsons's a few weeks ago in THE COMMONWEAL regarding the dilemma for the Catholic in Fascism, applies equally to Mexico. The Mexican Catholic is embarrassed by the fact that his opposition to the religious program of the Mexican governments has maneuvered him into the false position of hostility to all social reform. Unfortunately the anti-religious campaign, the anti-clerical trend and the Socialist education plan have been bound up with the land program, the instruction of the Indian and even the artistic aims of the State.

Certain features strike the casual observer in Mexico. Socialism is in the air and permeates the atmosphere. The jargon of Marxism is heard in every discourse, in every broadcast, in every newspaper. The press reflects the stock phrases of nineteenth-century Socialism. Bookstalls are loaded with emancipated literature. Lectures are punctuated with threadbare Marxist tenets. The mechanism of the Mexican state is startling when discovered by the observer who expects to find political freedom and electoral emancipation the rule. First of all, Mexico is ruled by a single party, the National Revolutionary party. This organization, until recently under the leadership of Portes Gil, makes the politics of Mexico. The rôle of the National Revolutionary party is somewhat similar to that of the National-Socialist party in Germany. Again the analogy must be taken with modifications. There is no *Führer,* to be sure, but in a very practical way the party rules Mexico. There is no opposition of an organized character. The congress is handpicked by the party council. Elections consist of the ratification of the selections of the party chieftains. Mexico as a mass does not vote, cannot vote and is not even asked to vote. The National Revolutionary party represents perhaps 1,000,000 to 2,000,000 members. The political sentiments of the remaining 15,000,000 Mexicans is unknown. Public expression as such is absent. One-party rule—the essence of dictatorship—is the basis of the Mexican system. Be it Leftist or Rightist, the dictatorship idea is there. Be it the clenched fist or the open palm, the Mexican people are organized or stampeded along lines set down by the State. Totalitarianism of a Marxist nature is on the way.

Public institutions have felt the influence of this official ideology. The National University, unwilling to give way to state pressure and introduce Socialist education, was irreparably injured by

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state opposition. Academic freedom means nothing if Socialism is the creed to be imposed, any more than it does if Fascism is the rule. A new institution, the *Universidad Obrera,* developed to meet the needs of those who wanted their Marxism straight and unadulterated.

Hopeful signs are not lacking in Mexico. President Cárdenas has steered a policy considerably more encouraging to Catholics than his predecessors. The power and influence of extremist labor organizations is a factor which may shape or determine future policy. It is plain that extreme and tenacious Marxism will only widen the chasm between Church and State. On the other hand excessive zeal has done harm to the Catholic cause. The purpose after all is not the overthrow of the form of government which Mexico has evolved, but the conquest of that indispensable freedom which the Church requires for the realization of its mission.

AN AMERICAN OLD VIC

By GRENVILLE VERNON

IN THE theatre as elsewhere we live in an age of prose. Economics is the god of the intelligentsia. Our critics are forever demanding that our dramatists write "important plays," which apparently means social documents dealing with current economic or political problems. The problems of the human heart and the human soul, let alone of religion, are the last things they think about. Blissfully ignorant that these problems are the eternal ones, the only things which make a play live when the fashion of the hour has changed, they go about asking that the stage become a soap-box. At all odds they urge us to be contemporary. They are interested in things rather than in men, in the ideas of the moment rather than the ideals hallowed and proved by the touchstone of experience and time. To them a sit-down strike is vastly more important than the immortality of the soul. To quote the words of Hazlitt:

> [They] laugh in your face at the idea of retaining anything which has the damning stamp of custom upon it, and are for abating all former precedents, "all trivial fond records," the whole frame and fabric of society in the lump.

In fear of being thought outmoded they are all for being up to the minute, which they don't appear to realize means that the minute will very soon be up with them.

Yet recently our Up-to-the-Minute Men have been having qualms. They are not finding the soap-box is the altar of the gods or even of the muses. In fact they are finding the soap-box far from high enough, and current problems dull. The propaganda plays they were praising a season or so ago, whose authors they proclaimed the Hopes of the Drama, they are beginning to find stale and unprofitable. When this season the Theatre Guild produced "But for the Grace of God," they said it was not a play. It wasn't, but it was no less a play than things to which they had formerly given their accolade. Eugene O'Neill, of course, they had always sworn by, yet when realizing the bankruptcy of realism he turned to things of the spirit, they swore at him. They had praised him perhaps when he was writing of tortured spirits in "Strange Interlude" and "Mourning Becomes Elektra," in some strange way believing that the abnormal is important, but as soon as he put his feet on the high-road of art and wrote "Days without End," they intimated he was growing senile. But this season they are having their doubts.

What has done it? Well, in the first place they are on the whole intelligent young men, and it is only extreme youth which forever searches after novelty in the belief that only in novelty can there be originality. To quote Hazlitt again:

> Originality implies independence of opinion, but differs as widely from mere singularity as from the tritest truism. It consists in seeing and thinking for oneself; whereas singularity is only the affectation of saying something to contradict other people.

Young writers are often so affected without knowing it. To prove their originality they contradict the verdict of the ages. And then one day the spirit of the ages comes to them and they bow their heads. Not that most of these young critics are at present in that position; their heads are very much up in the air, but what is inside their heads is in a state of lamentable confusion. Though they are still asking for the social document, they have become aware of something else. When Maxwell Anderson's "High Tor" was produced some of them said they didn't know what it was all about, but there were others who knew that their souls had been touched by beauty. But most of all they have shown their awakening, and this time their praise has been practically unanimous, in their reception of two of the plays of Shakespeare. John Gielgud's "Hamlet" and Maurice Evans's "Richard II" have aroused their admiration and that admiration they have expressed worthily.

The return of Shakespeare to the New York stage has been the most encouraging event of the

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present season, and the response of the public shows that when the classic drama is nobly presented the public is hungry for it. The triumphs of Mr. Gielgud and Mr. Evans have made the triviality of contemporary farce, realistic drama and propaganda play apparent enough. Huge audiences have gone to "Hamlet" and to "Richard II" and have come away purged, in the phrase of Aristotle, by "pity and terror." They have come away uplifted and ennobled by meeting the beautiful and the true. They have come away realizing the transitory quality of human life, yet touched by the magic wand of the eternal. For Shakespeare writes of the human heart. His protean genius uses the contemporary only to project the universal, and because of this his plays are peculiarly salutary at the present time.

It is, however, humiliating to think that though there have been a number of Americans in these productions, the majority of the principal players have been of English birth and training. The reason is self-evident—there is today in America no training ground for Shakespearean or classic drama. Shakespearean acting must be learned, and it cannot be learned in the realistic theatre. Such acting requires a mastery of the "grand manner," which is the ability to think and act in terms of the imagination; to hold, it is true, the mirror up to nature, but to nature in its more exalted and profound manifestations. Moreover, those who act the classic drama must know how to speak musically, poetically, qualities which are not needed in the American genre play, and which may in such plays be even vices.

Now in England there are at least two theatres devoted to the classic drama, the Shakespeare Theatre at Stratford-on-Avon, and the Old Vic in London. In these two theatres the majority of modern English Shakespearean actors and actresses have secured their training. Maurice Evans and John Gielgud both played at the Old Vic, and it was from that theatre they set out to conquer London and New York. Had there been no Old Vic, Mr. Evans and Mr. Gielgud might today have been but two more capable actors of realistic plays, with no opportunity to display the poetic insight and imaginative fervor which is theirs today. Now the American actor has fully as great native talent as his English brother, in the matter of temperament he may even be his superior; and while he is handicapped in the matter of voice that handicap with training can be removed. Indeed in the case of the American actress it usually is removed. Where on the English stage is there as beautiful a voice as Katharine Cornell's, or more expressive and cultivated ones than those of Helen Hayes, Ina Claire or Jane Cowl? Given a theatre where such voices are needed and where they can be trained there will be many more such, in men and women.

The need for a theatre devoted to the classic drama has long been evident, yet since the failure of the New Theatre no such house has existed. Eva Le Gallienne's Civic Repertory Theatre was the nearest approach to such an institution, but it was too much dependent on one personality to make it a national institution. It is an ironic thought that while the Stratford Theatre was able to raise in the United States $750,000 for the construction of its new building, and the Jews of New York put into one production, "The Eternal Road," nearly an equal sum, there has been no serious effort hitherto to endow a theatre where the American actor can learn the art of classic acting or where the American theatregoer can be sure of seeing the plays of Shakespeare and of the other great classic dramatists.

So it is that Sunday evening, February 14, 1937, may well prove to be a red letter night in the history of the American theatre. On that evening a meeting was held in the National Arts Club in Gramercy Park at which was sponsored what is to be called the New American Theatre, an institution to be modeled on the lines of the Old Vic. The meeting was arranged by Mr. and Mrs. Charles Coburn, whose recent success in the Mohawk Drama Festival in the presentation of classic plays made them feel that the time was ripe for a serious effort to be made in the establishment of such a theatre in New York. Among those at the meeting were: Walter Hampden; Arthur Goodrich, the well-known dramatist; Henry Bruere, president of the Bowery Savings Bank; Blanche Yurka; Vincent Price, the Albert of "Victoria Regina"; John Anderson, dramatic critic of the New York *Evening Journal;* and Margaret Webster of the Old Vic, who directed Maurice Evans in his production of "Richard II." At this meeting a committee was formed to raise money for the new theatre, and it is understood that a substantial sum has already been pledged. In discussing the project Mr. Coburn writes:

> The New American Theatre will resemble the famous Old Vic of London, and will seek to develop for our own country, in the nation's theatrical center, the most promising native talent. The new institution also proposes to bridge the gap that now confronts those who have completed some academic training course in dramatic art and who are faced with the necessity of acquiring professional acting experience before the pathway of opportunity can be open to them. Through its facilities and organization the New American Theatre will provide foremost stars and personalities of the theatre with an opportunity to appear from time to time in cherished rôles, old and new. The institution will encourage the formation of similar projects in other large cities and the company will make nation-wide tours under local auspices.

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The fact that the new organization proposes to employ the services of leading actors and actresses in plays in which they desire to appear, but which unassisted they would be unable to present, is of specially good omen. A mere stock company, no matter how excellent, would not have the popular appeal possessed by the appearance of guest stars. Yet the enormous expense entailed in the production of certain plays might well cause these stars to think twice before engaging a company and making a production of these plays. Yet with a company already in existence, and a theatre with a subscription list already there, these stars might gladly offer their services. It will not be necessary to erect a special theatre at once. There are houses in New York already available, such as the New Amsterdam, which would be ideal for such an enterprise. The theatre must not be too small, as the low prices such an organization must offer require a fairly large seating capacity. Such a theatre should ask no more than a $2 top, for it must appeal to the public which has not the means to pay the higher Broadway prices. It is this public which is hungry for the best things in the drama, a public of students and of moderate wage earners. The New Theatre foundered on the rock of social prestige. The New American Theatre must appeal to the people for support.

There will of course be nothing sectarian or even primarily religious in such a theatre, and yet the establishment and support of a Shakespearean playhouse ought to be of peculiar appeal to Catholics. Shakespeare, while not probably a professing Catholic, belonged to the Catholic tradition, and the production of his plays ought to be encouraged and supported by every thinking Catholic. White lists and black lists are not enough, though they are useful. A certain number of Catholics no doubt attend plays because they are denominated unobjectionable, and this is all to the good, but more is needed if the Catholics of the nation are really to have an effect on the type of play offered to the public. The dramas of Shakespeare, with one or two exceptions, are healthy in essence and salutary in effect, and a movement to give them a worthy home will do much to raise both the ethical and artistic standard of the American theatre. The production of the plays of Shakespeare gives the public a standard by which to judge the contemporary drama; by witnessing "Hamlet" or "Othello" or "Macbeth" our minds are elevated and our sense of ethical and artistic fitness sharpened. They show us by their very contrast the ignominy of much of what is given us today in the name of dramatic art. Therefore any effort to spread their influence by giving them worthier and more frequent productions will do much to correct the abuses which have crept into the modern theatre. It is not enough to be merely minatory; that is of merely negative effect. We need today something positive, the presentation of examples of what the stage is at its best. Only by the production of such plays will the theatre be raised from the quagmire into which it has fallen.

It is then to be hoped that when the final plans of the New American Theatre are published that the Catholics of New York and indeed of the country will give their support to the movement: those who can afford it, by contributing to its endowment, and those who cannot, by attending its performances whenever possible. Whether or not a purely Catholic theatre movement is practical at this time in the United States, a movement to support the Shakespearean drama may well be held to come at least partly under this head. And what is more such a movement is practical. The plays are there ready to be produced and the audiences ready to see them. It is only the training of the actors that is wanting, and this is precisely what the New American Theatre promises to supply. Probably the Church can do nothing officially to aid the new movement, yet unofficially both the clergy and laity can do much. There are several million Catholics in a fifty-mile radius of New York, and innumerable other Catholics come to the metropolis. If only a small proportion of these can be prevailed upon to attend the performances of the new organization its success will be assured. Let us hope that when the announcement is made of supporters of the project that many of the names will be found to be those of leaders both lay and clerical of the Church. It is said that the novels of Walter Scott did more to weaken anti-Catholic prejudice in England than any other force; the plays of Shakespeare are a far greater power. Whatever may have been the religious belief of their creator, he was never false to the primary morality and decencies of life. His plays are fountains not only of esthetic joy, but of ethical and even religious inspiration.

Prayer to Saint Joseph

(For the Sisters)

This is not Nazareth, this ordered place
  Where voices drone, and childish tasks are done;
And Mary is not here, save in the trace
  Of kindred love; nor is it now her Son
Who here grows strong in wisdom and in grace.

Yet, Joseph, by the rugged beams your hand
  Once cut for them, and by the walls you laid,
We ask thee now: "Be quick to understand
  This prayer's the same that once Another made,
The same reliant trust, the same demand:

"Be firm Protector, Guardian, be strong, be mild,
Another virgin needs thee, and another child."

JOHN W. LYNCH.

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SOME FURTHER REFLECTIONS

By GEORGE N. SHUSTER

MY GOOD friend Father Talbot has wasted an article on me in *America* for April 10, and what he wrote he wrote like a gentleman. It seems expedient to reply on a few points, and I shall try to do so *non in furore*, thus concluding what I have to say on the subject of the Spanish war.

On one point we are agreed—I know very little about Spain. But no harm is done by adding that neither does Father Talbot. What can we really know? When one has read the press and the propagandists, one is certain only that for months a savage massacre has been in progress, doing nobody any good. And if one talks privately with those who have returned from the scene, the conversation becomes a long dribble of horror stories. Nothing in the whole dreadful business makes sense excepting the simple fact that Spain is being destroyed with the help of imported fanaticisms. Under these circumstances the part of wisdom would seem to lie in every decent effort to sift the evidence, or, if that cannot be done, to weigh the conclusions which relatively competent Europeans have formulated. But when THE COMMONWEAL published an article summarizing Catholic views critical of Franco, not a few persons seemed to feel called upon to exhaust the less attractive portions of our common vocabulary. My paper was an attempt to defend Miss Carter's right to say what she thought; and in a more general sense it intimated that the more one listened the more certain it was bound to become that Spain is the scene of a great tragedy rather than of any victorious crusade.

I can't help believing that the English language is sufficiently flexible to permit the relatively clear exposition of such views. But somehow my remarks led Father Talbot to say: "I rather believe that Mr. Shuster's preoccupation with them [i. e., the Nazis] is clouding his vision of that other more dangerous form of the totalitarian state, Moscowism." He was nice about it but he really meant what a very irate lady declared—that I had turned Communist. I can't help finding this rather amusing. Father Talbot must surely know that since 1933 a great deal of "joint effort" has been made to "demonstrate" against the Hitlerites. Has he ever seen me on any of those programs? I can assure him that it was not for lack of opportunity! Whenever any organization has approached Nazism from against a partly Communist background, I have made myself conspicuous by retiring from the scene. And if what I have written on the subject cannot be read without too much trouble, it is after all easy enough to find out what the radical Marxists have issued by way of an indictment. This policy is, I know, subject to criticism. But at least I have adopted it, and may add rather proudly that it has cost me a good deal more opportunity and popularity than have been sacrificed by those who venture to suspect me—a Borah Republican and, I hope, a Catholic—of secret flirtations with Herr Stalin.

Father Talbot has asked me this question in particular: granted a dictatorship by General Franco and one by Señor Caballero, which would I choose? I can only repeat emphatically that I want neither. And I shall add quite candidly: one's human affection for embattled priests and religious lead one to side with Franco; but one's love for the timeless mission of the Church leads one to believe that he may, after all, prove to be the greater of two evils. It is a dreadful dilemma. Now let me ask Father Talbot this: were Caballero a devoted Catholic, on which side would the outlook for social justice lie? There is no doubt of what the answer would have to be, for Caballero (not the individual but the representative) is the scourge that follows upon certain sins. And so let us ask ourselves the final and the only important question: why is Caballero not a devoted Catholic?

When we put that fateful query, which lays bare what we modern men have done in nearly every country to the poor and to their love for our holy Church, we have found the key to contemporary Europe. It is not a matter for dialectic. It is simply the horrifying contrast between the ethics of the Christian Gospel and the conduct of modern society. And every effort to uphold Christian ethics by upholding an anti-Christian social order is bound to fail, while, conversely, our social order can only be supported by a restoration of Christian ethics.

That may sound remote and even banal. But one can be very specific. Father Talbot has forgotten to mention that although antagonistic to Fascism I have often expressed admiration for the gifts and achievements of Mussolini. And it seems to me that if we observe the position in which this skilful statesman now finds himself, we shall discover a highly important truth. Inherent in Fascism is the assumption that safety is to be found in a purely nationalistic economy which can subordinate both labor and capital to a martial state purpose while allowing a measure of freedom to both. But: since this economy is neces-

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sarily costly in itself, primarily by reason of the martial state purpose, a heavy burden is created which must be passed on to the toiling masses. Therefore in times of stress the political and social responsibility of the government becomes enormous. It cannot shift part of the blame to other shoulders, for it alone exists. Consequently the Fascist state must proceed to use more and more violent means. Inside the country, private energies are increasingly liquidated. Outside, acts of violence become more and more necessary. The working out of this process in Italy can be observed with the naked eye. It means that both at home and abroad the masses of the people must be victimized (e. g., the "volunteers" in Spain), so that antipathy to the régime cannot help but grow. That it is growing seems quite certain, nor are the reasons why either hard to find or hidden from view.

If Mussolini and Italy present this spectacle, what shall we find elsewhere? One has only to look around and see that Fascism is rapidly being converted into what has been termed "National Bolshevism." In Germany, for example, a system is coming into being which differs so little from "Moscowism" that the eventual alliance of the two states is no longer the fear of just a few dreamy mortals. The fourth partition of Poland has ceased to be a mirage. Very probably a large number of Nazis wish no such development. It is merely the inevitable finale of their system. The most elemental moral principles are discarded. A deep and bitter social antagonism is engendered. War for war's sake gradually becomes the only viable recipe. In short, there remains of Christian ethics less than enough to press between the pages of a book.

This is one reason why any identification of the Church with Fascism, however denominated, is so exceedingly dangerous. The concessions made in the name of "patriotic tradition" are of course tempting. But I do not see how anybody can read the writings of Pope Pius, from the decision concerning l'Action Française to the latest encyclical to the Mexican Church, without feeling that they constitute a long warning against that temptation. This point I do not wish to stress, knowing full well that it lies outside my competence. But let me say this: conservative people often fail to see what they are doing when they ignore the evident perils of the Fascist state on the ground that it is after all preferable to Communism. They do not stop to think that this state by no means stamps out the things that make Communism and must therefore eventually absorb Communism or perish. (We shall see, I think, that Mussolini will either restore a measure of parliamentary government, and therewith of freedom, or give way to a Leftist revolution.) It is not widely enough realized that under modern conditions a conservative ethos is impossible unless two things are done: the rights of the worker must be made an integral concern of society, and those rights must be freely and creatively exercised. There will be a condition of permanent revolution in the world until a sound conservatism has been reestablished, and it is not to be reestablished in any other way. Communism and Fascism are simply twin forms of this revolution.

The situation in Spain is in two respects particularly dangerous. It is not important whether General Franco calls himself a Fascist, just as it was inconsequential whether Franz von Papen was behind Hitler, or Hitler behind Franz von Papen. With the help of swarms of Moors, 150,000 Italians and as many Germans as can be packed into Bremen, the "march on Madrid" is being carried on. But: the condition of labor is worse in Spain than it is anywhere else in Europe, and it is assumed that Catholicism (for the first time) is backing the other side. These things mean that if the Fascist state wins out, the cleavages will be extraordinarily great, and (automatically) that antipathy to the Church will grow.

I cannot help facing that probability with the deepest alarm, because I am both a Catholic and a conservative. If my fears prove unfounded, I shall be very happy indeed. Meanwhile the other way—the course of action recommended in the encyclical to the Mexican Church—seems fearfully hard. But the centuries before us often took it, and there is no record of failure. Hugenberg's Lutherans believed that if they put Hitler into power, they could restore the vigor of their Church. We now see that wherever that Church has compromised with Nazism it has been infected with death, and that Protestant Christianity has been kept alive by men who risked all. One able critic has reminded me that I am living at ease in a peaceful country. And very glad of it! Nevertheless many of my German friends have learned what bearing witness to the Faith means. I have had the privilege of suffering with them in spirit as they bore up under months of brutal treatment in concentration camps, or years of exile in poverty and loneliness. I have known men who have given their lives; and there are those among them in whose name the whole Church will some time assuredly pray.

We have no right to suppose that to us has been given the privilege of saving Cleanness with unclean hands. In so far as poor unhappy Spain is concerned, I find myself wishing only that Christians in this country were sufficiently strong and united to support their government in an endeavor to bring about a cessation of the conflict. For however our opinions may differ on this or that, Father Talbot and I are surely in agreement that Christ is the Prince of Peace.

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CATHOLICS IN COOPERATIVES

By BERNARD M. FLYNN

"THEY are called wise who put things in their right order and control them well." The order is to be determined by the end in view so that, if a man wishes to attain an end, his scale of values must be conformed to it in a way that will further his purpose. These opening thoughts of the "Summa Contra Gentiles" might well be pondered by men today because the press of material and proximate needs sometimes tends to obscure our vision of the Ultimate Good. The joys of beatitude will not be tasted by him who allows lesser ends to substitute their glamors for the glories of the Vision. But the wise man need have no fear of this because he will accept the admonition of Christ, "Seek ye therefore first the kingdom of God, and His justice, and all these things shall be added unto you." This does not mean that we are to wait until after death for the Kingdom, but in virtue of our union with Christ in baptism, we are to live the supernatural life on earth and lend our efforts to the establishment of the temporal Kingdom, the Church, and hence gain admission to the eternal Kingdom in Heaven. Membership in the Mystical Body of Christ imposes duties upon us in proportion to the privileges we enjoy. As each member gains supernatural life from the Body, he likewise has the duty of aiding in its growth. This duty to seek first the Kingdom of God is the ultimate end of the baptized to which all minor purposes must be subordinated as means.

These considerations are, I think, apropos and fundamental in a discussion of Catholic participation in the Cooperative Movement. The Church in America is fortunate in the possession of men (though sadly not enough of them) among the clergy and laity who are enthusiastic leaders in the movement toward economic cooperation. Theirs is a generous, unselfish spirit. They give freely of their time for social betterment. Rightly they oppose the injustices of our economic system as being unchristian. But here a question arises. What are Catholics seeking? Is it mere material improvement? The nature of the Church does not warrant this view. Catholicism demands that material wealth be subordinated to the spiritual. The Catholic leaders should have a positive Catholic program—that of instilling the true Christian spirit into the cooperators so that they may live the Christ-life on earth in a spirit of Christian brotherhood. This positive Catholic program is often not sufficiently stressed, if not entirely overlooked by Catholic cooperators. It is here that they depart from the path of wisdom because they make the Cooperative Movement (at least by implication) an end in itself. If there is to be a whole-hearted Catholic support of the movement, it must be the concrete expression of Catholic principles made alive by full realization of the nature of the Church and subordinated as a means to the end of establishing the Kingdom of God on earth.

The fact that many Catholics apparently do not realize the need for a positive Catholic program of cooperation makes it necessary to show the diversity of aim between Catholics and other groups. Let me quote a paragraph from a pamphlet published by the Northern States Cooperative League:

> The cooperatists see in cooperation an end in itself, while both the socialistic (or communistic) and bourgeois cooperators consider it only as a means. The bourgeois cooperators look at cooperation as a means of perfecting and strengthening the existing economic régime, while the socialistic and the communistic cooperators look at it as a means of destroying the present system and preparing for the Socialist or Communist régime. A cooperatistic cooperator again thinks that the present-day cooperatives conceal in themselves the entire society of the future much in the same way as a seed bears in itself the fruit. [V. S. Alanne, "Fundamentals of Consumer Cooperation," page 56. Minneapolis, Minn., 1935.]

The writer is treating of philosophies of consumer cooperation, to none of which, obviously, a Catholic can subscribe. Cooperation cannot be an end in itself, because it neglects religion. Religious-minded men are urged to support the movement, but if they are true to religion, they must recognize cooperation as being merely a means to the attainment of spiritual ends. The bourgeoisie and the Communists see cooperation in perspective, but their error is similar to that of the cooperatist. In their scheme proximate ends are still substituted for the ultimate end. With them the superstition of materialism is dominant. Hence they cannot be reckoned as wise. Nevertheless the Catholic can be a loyal supporter of the Cooperative Movement. Certainly he should promote material welfare. He can and should be in sympathy with other cooperative groups. But his attitude toward the movement must be brought into harmony with the spirit of Catholic doctrine so that spiritual needs will be treated as foremost.

It is common among cooperators to speak of the cooperative state as their aim. They desire a cooperative commonwealth rather than cooperatives in a capitalistic state. It is in this connection

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that Catholics must exert their strongest influence. The Catholic cooperator, along with the non-Catholic, is seeking a cooperative commonwealth; but unless the Catholic be wary, he will find himself untrue to Catholicism. I have said that it is the Catholic's first duty to serve spiritual ends. The cooperative culture can aid in the establishment of the Kingdom of God if it is inspired by spiritual ideals and if it is subordinated to spiritual ends, because a culture will follow the direction determined by the philosophy or theology of those who guide it and share in it.

Christopher Dawson gives an excellent treatment of this point in his book, "Progress and Religion." Indeed, one meets the thought continually in his writings. An analogy is drawn between a civilization and a human being. A civilization is composed of two elements—the material and the spiritual. The material element is the natural environment of a culture plus the material economic and political structure. It is a comparatively passive element. It conditions, rather than causes, the development of the civilization. The active vital principle is spiritual. It informs the material and gives it its orientation. There is a substantial union between the two principles as there is between the human body and soul, but the dominant directive force is spiritual. Usually this element is a religion; sometimes a philosophy is substituted for it. But in either case it is the intellectual attitude of a people that determines the direction of a civilization. "Behind every civilization there is a vision." It is the vision of a people trying to reify its spiritual outlook, or give it expression in the concrete.

Now, Mr. Dawson's point is urged on the basis of experimental evidence. Nevertheless, it is a truth with a strong foundation in perennial philosophy. A few principles can show the need of a spiritualizing force necessary to Catholicize the Cooperative Movement, and can demonstrate as well the inadequacy of philosophy to fulfil the requirements. The underlying principles are familiar to many, but their application to life is too often neglected. Consider the following: *Agere sequitur esse.* This is a very general principle stating that the action of a being is regulated by its nature. It is the foundation for a principle restricted in its application to rational being: "Every act presupposes an intellectual coefficient." This applies only to human acts as distinguished by the Scholastics from the *actus hominis.* It means that a man acts in accordance with his thoughts. They guide his actions and offer a norm for him to follow. The actions of a man connected with the Cooperative Movement will tend toward material or spiritual ends accordingly as his mind is occupied with thoughts of spiritual or material things. This is one reason that the Church is so insistent upon the immutability and importance of dogma. If the truth is upheld, the foundation is laid for correct action. It is only when the truth is obscured by the apparent good that the will chooses what is false. It is important, then, for Catholics in the Cooperative Movement to properly direct their efforts.

Other principles emerge from the following considerations. I have said that philosophy can demonstrate its own limitations in furnishing the necessary spiritual orientation for Catholicizing the Cooperative Movement. In treating of human acts it is necessary to consider the end in view. The Catholic is held to the establishment of the Kingdom of God—a supernatural end. Now the means must be proportioned to the end. Human beings, using only their natural faculties, and inspired by mere philosophy (even though it be true), can produce only a natural society because the effect will have in it no perfection that does not exist in the cause. The agent must be supernaturalized by grace in order to produce the Kingdom of God. But the source of grace is Christ. And so we must look to His religion for the spiritual impulse for cooperation because naturalism cannot attain the required end. Philosophy by definition is insufficient for our purpose. Religion alone can transform men into supernatural agents even while working on earth. And this religion is Catholicism.

Catholicism fulfils all the requirements of a spiritual impulse necessary to attain a supernatural end. It is a cooperative movement in the full sense of the word. At times its corporate nature is not fully realized by its members, unmindful that the Church is the Mystical Body of Christ. However, there is in the Church today a strong effort to combat modern individualism and to re-present to the world the true corporate nature of Christ's Church and the implication of this doctrine in worship and in life. This effort is known as the Liturgical Movement. It is my conviction that the Cooperative Movement cannot succeed as a Catholic movement unless it be animated by the Liturgical Movement so that its vital energy will be drawn from the liturgy. For it is in the liturgy that we find the expression of the true Christian spirit. There things are viewed in their proper proportion; the Kingdom of God is the ultimate goal. Anything anterior to that is merely a means.

The liturgy is active dogma. In it we find the dramatization of Catholic truths. The foundation is the Mystical Body of Christ of which we are all members and in which we are all brothers. When we assist at a liturgical function, we assist as members of the Mystical Body. We make the dogma live. At Mass it is the Mystic Christ that offers the Sacrifice. We all unite in the common oblation of ourselves. And this is the highest type of cooperation.

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Now, it is the cooperative spirit of Christians at Mass that must inform their lives to produce a Christian cooperative culture. If a man assists at Mass day after day with a full knowledge of its meaning, it will be natural for his daily life to be affected by it. But education must come first. Catholics must first be taught the Mass before they can appreciate and intelligently participate in it. After knowledge is acquired, action will follow. The liturgically minded man will participate in the Cooperative Movement as a Catholic should. His ultimate goal will be the establishment of the Kingdom of God. The Cooperative Movement will be a means to this end.

The liturgist meets many objections when he proposes his remedy for economic ills. He is told that he is not practical—he is an idealist. Perhaps there is a misunderstanding of the word "practical." It is often inferred that a practical cure must be immediate. But that is wrong. A practical cure is one that heals a disease. It is not a palliative. It does not merely touch the surface. It goes to the source of the trouble and removes the cause. For this very reason the Cooperative Movement left to itself cannot be a practical cure. It is a step in the right direction, but it avoids the fundamental ills of our civilization.

It is conceded by many men today that the fundamental ills are spiritual. We lack a spiritual informing principle to infuse vitality into our civilization and to mold it into unity. Spiritual unity has been lost for centuries, and with its loss there began the break-up of western civilization. The effective restoration of this unity can be accomplished only by those who find their inspiration in the Liturgy. In a sense this is idealism—the idealism of Christ our King, Who commanded us to serve the interests of His realm. The task is not easy, nor will its accomplishment be immediate. But we know that when we strive to fulfil the precepts of Christ, He will be with us "all days, even to the consummation of the world."

The Haters

I saw three rooks in a tall elm tree,
Croaking and keening hideously!
Like three old hags from a "Macbeth" scene,
Dirty and dark, and ragged and lean,
Shrilly croaking their hatred and scorn
Of earth and earth's—of the golden morn,
The light wind ruffling the towering elm,
The rain disturbing the pleasant calm,
A clumsy toad on a withered log,
Marigolds growing near a bog,
Dark blue gentians down by the lake—
They hated the world for hate's sweet sake,
And hated each other most of all,
Those three grim rooks in an elm-tree tall.

IVY O. EASTWICK.

THE PONTIFICAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

By BONAVENTURE SCHWINN

PIUS XI in his Motu Proprio of October 28, 1936, establishing the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, cites the changed attitude of scientific investigators toward revealed religion as one of the consolations with which Divine Providence has blessed his pontificate. The principle solemnly laid down by the Vatican Council in 1870 that "not only can faith and reason never be at variance, but they afford mutual help to each other," has been winning wider acceptance. In view of the increasing friendliness of scientists toward religion in our day, the Holy Father has deemed the present time opportune for the establishment of an Academy of Sciences.

The present Academy is in the nature of a restoration of the seventeenth-century Accademia dei Lincei founded by the distinguished scholar, Prince Federigo Cesi, at Rome, August 17, 1603. Collaborators with Cesi in the foundation of the original Academy were Fabio Colonna and Francesco Stelluti. The Academy was called "dei Lincei," because its emblem was the lynx, symbolizing the keenness of vision its members were to cultivate in their quest for truth. It was devoted chiefly to physical, mathematical and philosophical studies. The object of the institute, in the words of Cesi, was "not only the acquisition of the knowledge of things and of wisdom by the practise of a righteous and religious life, but also the instruction of men by word of mouth and by writing." Prince Cesi opened to the Academy his excellent library, his botanical garden, and his museum of antiquities, and for fifty years it enjoyed the greatest prestige. Such men as Galileo Galilei and Johann Faber of Bamberg shed luster upon it by their membership, and it published Fernandez de Oviedo's monumental "Natural History of Mexico" (Rome, 1651, fol.). Soon after the middle of the seventeenth century, however, the Accademia dei Lincei died out. It was revived as the Pontificia Accademia dei Nuovi Lincei, endowed, and placed under papal patronage by Pius IX, July 3, 1847. Leo XIII drew up a new constitution whereby he sought to encourage the development of the Academy in 1887, and in a letter to its patron, Cardinal Oreglia, he wrote: "We have considered worthy of much commendation and from the beginning of our pontificate We have fostered with special kindness the Pontificia Accademia dei Nuovi Lincei, whose obedience and loyalty even in the present difficult time have approved themselves to Us." Pius XI has restored the ancient Academy. In the words of the Motu Proprio, "We, in the fulness of our power, of our own free will, and after mature deliberation, restore this house of studies according to new norms and declare the same 'The Pontifical Academy of Sciences'; at the same time We promulgate the Statutes hereunto appended, as proper to it, in accordance with which the assembly is to be guided in future." The Motu Proprio, the Statutes, and the names of the members of the Academy are published in the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* for October 28, 1936.

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The end and scope of the Academy are thus stated in the Statutes: "The Pontifical Academy of Sciences proposes to encourage the study, development and history of the physical, mathematical and natural sciences." To this end, it will examine and discuss important questions pertaining to the physical and natural sciences and mathematics by means of dissertations and treatises; it will conduct scientific investigations and assist institutions and private individuals to carry on research; it will undertake the publication of works of a scientific nature; and it will hold conferences and convoke scientific congresses.

The Academy is under the immediate patronage of the Pope, who has named as its first president, Father Agostino Gemelli, O.F.M., professor of applied psychology in the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart at Milan. Members are of three classes. Besides the seventy ordinary members, who hold membership for life, there are five honorary members, among whom are the Cardinal Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Seminaries and Universities, the Cardinal Secretary of State and the Cardinal Vicar of Rome. Certain officials of the Holy See are supernumerary members of the Academy, who hold membership as long as they remain in office. The supernumerary members are the rector of the Vatican Astronomical Observatory, the prefect of the Laboratory of the Vatican Astrophysical Observatory, the prefect of the Vatican Library, the prefect of the Vatican Archives, and the rector of the Missionary Ethnological Museum. When a vacancy occurs among the ordinary members, a new Academician is to be voted in, usually after the merits of three eminent scientists are carefully considered.

The sessions of the Academy will be held in the Cancellaria Apostolica in accordance with a calendar which is to be drawn up. Academicians who live too far from Rome to attend meetings may designate a resident member to read their dissertations and act for them. Dissertations may be presented in the vernacular, but a summary in Latin must be added to papers read. The Holy Father has endowed the Academy, and members will receive honoraria for attending meetings and compensation for expenses incurred by participation in Academy undertakings. Those who engage in special projects for the Academy will receive special remuneration. The Academy can confer honors, subsidies and medals upon non-members as well as upon members.

The Academy will publish its *Acta* periodically, according to a schedule to be determined, and *Commentationes* at irregular intervals. The *Acta* will contain essays, an account of the discussions in public sessions, scientific notes, a list of books received, and news concerning the Academy's activities. Important scientific monographs and works crowned and awarded prizes by the Academy will appear in *Commentationes*.

Some of the privileges of Academicians are that they may occupy a special place in church reserved for them when the Holy Father is present and engaged in some solemn function. They have free access to the papal museums and art galleries. When in session the Academicians are entitled to wear the medal of the Academy, which shows on the obverse the papal tiara and keys with the legend *Deus Scientiarum Dominus* and on the reverse the name of the Academician surrounded by a wreath of olive and laurel. They may habitually wear a small reproduction which shows the obverse side of the medal.

Referring to the seventy members of the Academy, whom he himself has selected, the Holy Father says, "We have carefully chosen them from among the various scientists who are held in high honor in each country. In making this selection We have been influenced both by the importance of the labors and of the publications which each one on his part has contributed to the advancement of the sciences and by the reputation which these scholars, by common consent, enjoy in the ranks of the learned." The different nations are represented in the Academy as follows: Italy has thirty-three members; the United States six; Germany, France and Belgium each five; Holland four; England three; Austria two; Argentina, China, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Norway, Poland and Portugal each one. The six American Academicians are George David Birkhoff, professor of mathematics at Harvard University; Alexis Carrel, of the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research; Robert Andrews Millikan, director of the Norman Bridge Laboratory of Physics in the California Institute of Technology; Thomas Hunt Morgan, chairman of the Division of Biology and director of the William G. Kerckhoff Laboratories of the Biological Sciences in the California Institute of Technology; George S. Sperti, director of the Institutum Divi Thomae in the Athenaeum of Ohio; and Hugh Stott Taylor, professor of chemistry at Princeton University. The three English Academicians are Lord E. Rutherford of Nelson, professor of experimental physics at Cambridge University; Charles Sherrington, professor of physiology at Oxford University; and Edmond Whittaker, professor of mathematics at Edinburgh University.

The old Accademia dei Lincei was established at a time when very little attention was being paid to the physical sciences and mathematics. The Pontifical Academy of Sciences has been founded in an age of unprecedented devotion to the natural sciences, when research is being pursued with the greatest zeal in a thousand laboratories. It is another indication of the Church's traditional and unfailing interest in the discovery and spread of truth even in the merely natural and physical order. And it is a further proof of the present Pope's greatness, of his amazing energy and breadth of view, and of his untiring effort to be all things to all men.

White Flock

Many lives are lived in me
Shaping my mortality:
Assisi's saint who walked as one
With Brothers Wind and Rain and Sun,
Saint Augustine, the penitent,
And Emily Dickinson, who went
A lonely road to Calvary,
Her only comfort Bird and Bee. . . .
Jesus Christ, my Shepherd kind,
Guide this white flock of my mind.

ANNARRAH LEE STEWART.

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Seven Days' Survey

The Church.—Pius XI's encyclical, "Divini Redemptoris," which deals with the dangers of atheistic Communism and the Catholic means of meeting them, has been published in pamphlet form by the N.C.W.C. of 1312 Massachusetts Avenue, N. W., Washington, D. C., and the America Press of 461 Eighth Avenue, New York. An edition published by the Paulist Press of 401 West 59th Street, New York, will appear during the week. * * * At the direction of Bishop Thomas J. Walsh of Newark the complete text of "Divini Redemptoris" was read to the faithful in every church, religious house and community in the diocese as part of a triduum, April 12 to 14, in honor of Saint Joseph, Patron of the Universal Church and Patron of the Workingman. * * * Priestly vocations are rapidly increasing in Czechoslovakia, where 2,010 seminarians are now pursuing their studies. * * * The supervision of the Sisters of the Society of Catholic Medical Missionaries in Dacca, India, over the native midwives has cut the infant death rate in half and led to requests for establishment of their centers in many more cities. At Rawalpindi the maternal death rate in unsupervised areas is 13 percent. * * * The *Osservatore Romano* in speaking of the treatment of the Italian secular press of the recent papal encyclical dealing with violations of the Concordat by the German government said that their "chilly allusions to it" were "inspired evidently by a very brief and inexact communication from an official agency, which seemed almost to disguise the pontifical thought. This surprising attitude is all the more regrettable on the part of the Italian papers which preferred to report, at much greater length and without comment, an astonishing article from the *Voelkischer Beobachter* on the violability of treaties in the course of time." * * * The *Art Digest* reports that Sister Esther of St.-Mary-of-the-Woods College, Ind., is urging the formation of a Catholic College Art Association to revive Christian creative art, raise standards of appreciation and church and adornment and provide better facilities in Catholic colleges. * * * Bishop Pierre Falaise, O.M.I., Coadjutor Vicar Apostolic of Mackenzie in the Canadian Northwest, is in the United States for his second trip out of the Arctic wilds in twenty-four years, recovering from "Arctic blindness" due to the Arctic night and the glare of the midnight sun. There are 7,000 Catholics in his far-flung territory, much of which is visited by plane.

The Nation.—The Wagner Act decision, federal finance policies and the capital-labor conflicts were outstanding events of the week. * * * Negotiations between Washington, Canada, Ireland and England have resulted in plans for transatlantic commercial air service. Giant flying boats will speed mail and passengers between New York and London with stopovers in Canada and Ireland. * * * New York security and commodity markets slumped sharply, reaching a new low since August, 1936, on rumors that the administration would alter its gold-buying policy. * * * Weary of investigations, the House tabled on an overwhelming vote the Dickstein resolution for an inquiry into un-American activities and propaganda. The proposal was denounced as likely to engender racial and religious feeling. * * * Congratulations to the Children's Bureau on its twenty-fifth anniversary were extended by President Roosevelt, writing: ". . . As the agency through which the federal interest in the health and welfare of the children may be expressed, as a research center, the Children's Bureau has demonstrated the integrity of its work, and as a counselor its advocacy of the needs of children is known to be based upon unchallengeable facts." * * * The Senate Naval Affairs Committee recommended action to safeguard naval oil reserves, recalling the famous Teapot Dome scandal. * * * Specific denial of President Roosevelt's intention to call either an arms limitation or economic conference was made to the French government by Ambassador William C. Bullitt, fresh from his visit to the White House. * * * William Green, American Federation of Labor president, calling for a federal program that would employ 3,000,000 idle in the 1937-1938 fiscal year, estimated that the present program fell short by at least 1,000,000 jobs of providing for unemployed families where health and morale are in danger. * * * Ordering a reexamination of administrative estimated outlays for the next fiscal year, the President cited the possibility of a deficit "far greater" than anticipated last January unless "there is an immediate curtailment of expenditures." * * * William F. Warms, acting captain, and Eben Starr, chief engineer, were exonerated by the New York Circuit Court of Appeals of criminal negligence in the death of 134 aboard the S.S. Morro Castle, which burned off the Jersey Coast last summer. The court declared Warms, heretofore faced with a two-year jail term, had "preserved the best traditions of the sea."

The Wide World.—Unusually heavy fighting was reported from Spain, as both sides launched important offensives. Troops under the command of General Mola attacked Basque forces defending Durango and Bilbao, and gained a considerable amount of terrain. Warships blockaded the harbors, imperiling British shipping. His Majesty's government thereupon ordered merchant vessels to expect no protection inside the three-mile limit. Therewith a marked shortage of food added to the difficulties of Bilbao. On the other hand, Leftist armies launched a fierce attack on Insurgent forces occupying the northwest of the city with the object of breaking the "iron ring" which has encircled Madrid. Casualties were reported to have been very heavy. Italy replied to charges that it had violated the non-intervention agreement with statements that French general staff officers were in command of the Leftist armies, and that Moscow was planning to send aid on a large scale. In London, Mr. An-

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thony Eden guessed that there were "24,000,000 reasons" why foreign control of Spain would prove to be out of the question. * * * Chancellor Kurt Schuschnigg threw cold water on legitimist hopes in Austria by announcing that restoration of the Hapsburg monarchy was not immediately practicable. He said that no majority favoring Otto was certain as yet, and that anyhow restoration could not occur so long as the move would involve a risk of war. * * * The gyrations of the French franc constituted a most interesting topic during the week. Rumors that President Roosevelt planned to lower the gold price were emphatically denied by Washington, but it seemed as if the French currency situation had little to do with those rumors. Evidently the stabilization board had decided to lower prices, at least for the summer, and was content to let the franc drift nearer the minimum fixed by law. Some dissatisfaction was expressed in Socialist circles, where demands were heard for a wider recourse to public works as a means to mitigate unemployment. * * * Averring that it was as impossible to combine Communism or Fascism with the British system as it would be "to graft a Siberian crabapple to an oak," Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin announced his intention of retiring. This event is expected to take place after the Coronation, some features of which are peculiarly Mr. Baldwin's work. * * * The Infanta Eulalie told newspapermen in Paris that King Alfonso XIII had donated $10,000,000 to the cause of General Franco. No confirmation of this report was obtained from other sources; and the Infanta gave no references to authorities substantiating her report.

* * * *

Catholic Charities.—During the past week, 20,000 workers have sought to raise $1,372,000 for New York's Catholic charities. Last year the fund available was somewhat lower, and provided the means needed to conduct the various activities in which the archdiocese is engaged as ministrant to the poor, the aged and the young. Cardinal Hayes opened this year's effort with a sermon in St. Patrick's Cathedral, which emphasized the abiding value of private charity. No matter how much government does, he said, "it cannot give the personal spirit, the personal attention, the human touch, and above all the spirit of Christ, which are essential." The same day—April 10—witnessed the official luncheon to 1,500 people with which the campaign began. Mayor Fiorello La Guardia and ex-Governor Alfred E. Smith addressed the assembled guests. The Mayor quoted from "Quadragesimo Anno." Later on it was announced that a woman's committee, headed by Mrs. Douglas Gibbons, would seek to raise $150,000 of the total sum. "We who raise funds continually flirt with a danger, the danger of treating our donors not as human beings participating communally in a common and splendid trait of human character, but as mechanical things, as financial jets to be turned on and kept running as long as possible. Such an attitude is very apt, eventually, to make organized charity seem a distasteful duty to the average man, rather than a desirable and spiritually remunerative opportunity to participate in the adventure of community life." Perhaps the largest single donation to Catholic Charities came last year from the Friedsam Foundation.

Labor Act Decision.—After weeks of expectation the Supreme Court finally ruled on the constitutionality of the Wagner Labor Act, April 12. By another five-to-four decision it held that in the case of the Jones and Laughlin Steel Corporation, the Fruehauf Trailer Corporation and the Friedman-Harry Marks Clothing Company, Incorporated, while the manufacture of their products was local, their business was in fact interstate and came within the interstate clause of the Constitution. The Court also ruled that the Associated Press was engaged in interstate commerce and that the Wagner Labor Act did not abridge the freedom of speech and of the press protected in the First Amendment. The majority decision of Chief Justice Hughes and Associate Justices Brandeis, Cardozo, Roberts and Stone also declared that Congress has the power to protect interstate commerce from the obstructions and burdens placed upon it by industrial warfare and that employees have a clear right to organize in their own interests. It also asserted that the Wagner Act's provisions to effect collective bargaining through the holding of plant elections did not interfere with the employer's normal right to hire and discharge. The decision further held that the National Labor Relations Board could not interfere with the employer's discharge powers when they were not used to intimidate or force workers to desist from their lawful organizing activities. The Court was unanimous in holding that the Washington, Virginia and Maryland Bus Company was engaged in interstate commerce and was subject to the Wagner Act. One result of this decision was a renewed determination on the part of labor to unionize the nation's industries. Another was the widely expressed hope that the President would now abandon his Supreme Court "packing" plan, but Mr. Roosevelt declared that he stood firm. The feeling persisted in Washington, however, that some compromise plan might now be effected.

The Belgian Elections.—Léon Degrelle, brilliant young pamphleteer with a zest for making politics worth the price of admission, challenged the Belgian government by ordering one of his men to resign from parliament and running for the job himself. Thereupon Premier Paul Van Zeeland went out and hired a few publicity men. For the first time in many years, politics had all the burghers staring out their windows. They saw donkeys bearing the slogan, "I vote for Rexism"; they beheld placards of enormous dimensions and lurid colorfulness. Yet for all that the chances were that the Rexists might roll up a total of 200,000 votes, despite an opposition that ranged all the way from the Catholic party to the Communists. Degrelle had enlisted the aid of Flemish nationalists; he had shouted charges of corruption through a rapidly moving loud speaker. Then King Leopold spoke out. Very gently but firmly he doubted M. Degrelle's veracity. Next the Cardinal Archbishop of Malines, Monseigneur Van Roey, issued a letter stating: "We are convinced that the Rex party constitutes a

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danger for the country and the Church." This epistle naturally created a sensation, in view of Degrelle's theory that his was the only "integral" Catholic political movement in Belgium. As a matter of fact, the Cardinal went much further than had been expected. Those Catholic voters who had planned to cast blank ballots because Socialists and Communists were voting for Van Zeeland, were told that such ballots were undesirable. The results of the election were: Van Zeeland polled 76 percent of the votes; Degrelle got 19 percent; and the balance bore no name at all. It was a crushing defeat, which the defeated Rexist leader blamed on Cardinal Van Roey. But of course all is not yet rosy. M. Van Zeeland must henceforth steer between several dozen Scyllas. The rising prosperity is, however, an aid of real moment and worth.

Anti-Communism. — Michael Carmody, Supreme Knight, opened a nation-wide Knights of Columbus drive against Communism in New York City. A large group of delegates from the entire metropolitan area heard him declare that "there can be no quarter between the position of the Catholic Church and Communism." The campaign will be vigorously conducted in every one of the 2,500 Knights of Columbus councils throughout the United States and Canada. The New York rally is the first of a series Mr. Carmody will hold in other large cities within the next few months. "The Knights' Crusade" will largely consist of an educational campaign solely within the order. Plans for the campaign have been forwarded to the Papal Secretary of State. Former Governor Alfred E. Smith and Matthew Woll, vice-president of the American Federation of Labor, were among the speakers at a second anti-communism mass meeting in New York. The meeting was held under the auspices of the American Association against Communism, Incorporated, and sponsored by the International Catholic Truth Society. Governor Smith declared that there was "no room in America," a Christian country, for a social philosophy that denied the existence of God. Mr. Woll warned the audience that we are on "the threshold of a crisis which is so grave that it stands as a challenge to both Church and labor, and to the ideals of social justice to which both are committed. Both by principle and precept, as well as by promptings of self-preservation, it is essential therefore that the Church and labor should strive side by side for the enhancement and enrichment of liberty and freedom, personal as well as industrial, religious and social." Those present pledged themselves to "work for a greater distribution of the fruits of labor; for justice to workers, farmers, employers and employees alike; for the creation of richer opportunities for youth; for the protection of the aged by appropriate social legislation; and for the spiritual as well as physical betterment of our country through class cooperation."

Father Rossaint.—On April 7, the People's Court, sitting at Berlin, began to hear the evidence against seven Catholics—four priests and three laymen—accused of high treason. These cases have been pending since February, 1936, when the offices of the Catholic Youth Organization in Duesseldorf were invaded and Monsignor Ludwig Wolker taken off to prison. The Monsignor was released, and it had been hoped that the others would some time get off. Many look upon the present trials, which are public hearings, as the Nazi retaliation to the Pope's encyclical. The principal defendants are Father Joseph Rossaint and Father Jacob Clemens. They are accused of collusion with Communists. Father Rossaint, a veteran ultra-pacifist, was noted for his outspoken opposition to rearmament, and had been warned several times by friends of the dangers to which he was exposing himself. When interrogated by the court, he admitted cheerfully that he had distributed pacifist propaganda. The government charges, however, that he sought to bring about a liaison between Communists and Catholics. Such evidence as has been introduced on this point indicates merely that he tried to do missionary work among a few stray Communists who wandered into the meetings sponsored by his organization. Much stress is placed on this charge, because Communist activity is automatically treasonable and can be punished with death. Pacifist propaganda as such, however, would constitute high treason only under an ex post facto law. The trial has been marked by violent harangues by the court in exposition of favorite Nazi doctrines. It is conceded that the outlook for the accused is dark. Some efforts are being made outside Germany to exercise such intervention as is conceivable and practicable.

Non-Catholic Religious Activities.—Commenting on his experiences during the National Preaching Mission, Dr. E. Stanley Jones says in the *Christian Century,* "The supreme lesson that we have learned is that the soul of America is hungry if you can get to it. . . . The Church must . . . move forward with its message into the soul of America, a soul which in large measure is a moral and spiritual vacuum, empty of a positive way to live." * * * Of Finland's 3,600,000 inhabitants 96 percent are Lutherans. Young people's movements are prominent there. * * * Educators in Birmingham, Ala., are much pleased with the working of the Chattanooga plan of religious instruction now in operation in their public schools. The various churches pay the teachers who are appointed by the city Board of Education on the basis of general educational qualifications as well as their ability to instruct in religious matters. Classes are held in the city's public schools, but they are elective, and students not interested in this instruction may devote the time to other subjects. Parents have the deciding voice as to their children's religious instruction. * * * The New York State Conference of the National Council of Jewish Women, meeting at Utica, passed resolutions on a number of social questions, among them low-cost housing as provided in the Wagner-Steagall bill, uniform marriage and divorce laws, women juries, child labor referendum, health examinations before marriage and world peace. * * * The Associated Press reports considerable preparation in Russia for the celebration of the Greek Orthodox Easter, May 2, and at the same time the organization of anti-religious schools by the Godless League.

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Federal Finances.—Problems arising out of finances involving, not only the Federal Budget, but the de facto stabilization of the dollar, pound sterling and franc, are again to the fore in Washington. Uncertainty of future governmental policies provoked repercussions in the stock and commodities markets, in foreign capitals and in Congress. Rumors, met with specific denials, were succeeded by new rumors. Fundamentally the dilemma is one of deflation or inflation. The White House holds the key. congressional leaders, with a suspicious eye on present budgetary trends, continue to fear the necessity of levying additional taxes. The President reiterated the hope that no new taxes would be needed at this session of Congress. Revenue authorities at the Capitol, particularly Chairman Harrison of the Senate Finance Committee and Chairman Doughton of the House Ways and Means Committee, have repeatedly announced that no tax increase will be proposed by them. Yet Senator Robinson, Senate administration leader, warned that the government had almost exhausted the sources of taxation to which it was "willing or able to resort." He declared that unless drastic retrenchments in expenditures were made new tax legislation would be necessary. The relief appropriation of $1,537,000,000 mentioned in the first budget message promises to be a bone of contention. One congressional group, urged on by mayors who do not wish WPA allotments to cities cut, and senators interested in new appropriations for farm tenancy, housing and education, threaten to boost the figure to $2,000,000,000; another, bent on economy, are determined to hold it to $1,000,000,000. In the background of the financial picture remains the indication that the President, at least temporarily, spoke for a deflationary attitude when he expressed dissatisfaction with certain price levels and announced an effort to bring them down by a change in government buying policy. Alteration of the gold-buying policy of the government, which the administration has denied specifically, was widely discussed here and abroad. The President has power to lower the $35 an ounce price for gold, a step which would be a deflationary move to start the movement of gold outward. General expectancy exists that he will take some action, with the odds even between an outright deflationary move or indirect action to permit inflation proceeding along its present course with such checks as the President can apply.

* * * *

The Strike Front.—As predicted, conditions in Detroit remained peaceful after the Chrysler settlement of demands for collective bargaining recognition. The most violent outburst of the week took place at the model Hershey chocolate plant in Pennsylvania, when 3,000 to 4,000 farmers, angered at the loss of their market for 800,000 pounds of milk a day, descended upon the plant armed with clubs and farming tools and with the aid of 1,000 workers not in sympathy with the strike proceeded to eject the sit-downers without serious casualties. Next day, the C.I.O. threatened to bring on its burly coal miners to oust non-striking workers and the plant was again shut down. Finally, April 10, Mr. Hershey agreed to a parley; in two days arrangements for a plant election were agreed upon. It was announced that the C.I.O. was undertaking the organization of the 270,000 employees of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, the nation's largest corporation. The rift between the C.I.O. and the A. F. of L. continued to widen. William Green announced plans, April 9, for the final expulsion of the Lewis organization from the A. F. of L. It was reported from Pittsburgh that a tense fight is in progress between the two to organize 45,000 Westinghouse employees. At Galena, Kans., April 11, shots from a C.I.O. office were reported to have wounded nine lead miners of rival union sympathies. Henry Ford issued a series of pronouncements from his winter home at Ways, Ga., ranging from his characterization of labor unions as "the worst thing that ever struck the earth" to a statement following the Wagner Labor Act decision that his workmen were "free to join anything they want to." His reiterated determination not to indulge in collective bargaining struck a responsive chord in many an individualistic breast. Meanwhile Congress warily took up the sit-down question. The Dies resolution to investigate the situation was defeated along strictly party lines, April 8, but five days later the House Labor Committee reported favorably on the Senate resolution condemning sit-downs. A serious General Motors labor dispute led to a government crisis in Ontario.

Social Security.—April marked the tenth anniversary of *Social Security,* the monthly organ of the American Association for Social Security. The association was formed February 4, 1927, to make real social action for the unemployed. At the time there were only four pension laws which gave inadequate assistance to about 1,000 persons in two states. Poorhouses, breadlines, soup kitchens and municipal lodging-houses were the only resort of unemployed workers. In its anniversary issue, the association points out that 1,200,000 old men and women are receiving self-respecting aid in 41 states, the District trict of Columbia had enacted unemployment compensapension laws. By March, 1937, 43 states and the District of Columbia had enacted unemployment compensation laws. Thus social responsibility for the unemployed has been recognized and established. For the third successive year, the association has introduced a bill for federal aid to state health insurance, a model of which is now before many state legislatures. The ten-year record of the association and its organ is heralded as "A Decade which Changed the Face of America" by many outstanding leaders in all fields of life. The anniversary itself was observed by a special issue of *Social Security* and a National Conference on Social Security in New York City, April 9 and 10. Discussions of "The Next Decade in Social Security," "Present Trends in Old-Age Security," "First Lessons in Unemployment Insurance Administration," "Assessing the Realities in Social Security," "Health Insurance—the Next Step" and "Is America Meeting the Problem of Old Age Dependency?" were on the conference program.

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The Play and Screen

Young Madame Conti

THE INTEREST of "Young Madame Conti" lies not in the play itself but in the acting, and notably in the acting of Miss Constance Cummings. Miss Cummings, young as she is, with stage experience only in the chorus of a musical show and in one Broadway play of two seasons ago, "Accent on Youth," displays an authority, a power and a poignancy which reminds one of the fine emotional actresses of the past. It is idle to denominate this sort of acting as unreal simply because the actress gives rein to her emotions; the whole question being, does the actress make her emotions credible? There is no doubt that the audiences respond to Miss Cummings's impersonation—they respond not only with applause but with cheers—and the reason is that incredible as the part is at times, Miss Cummings is always credible. It is likewise idle to call this type of acting old-fashioned simply because of recent years we have not met with it. The fashion of the last twenty years has been for realistic plays which required subdued emotions, and the stage has been the weaker for it. The great plays of the theatre are not of this sort, and while "Young Madame Conti" is not a great play, is not perhaps even a good play, it does present its chief protagonist with the opportunity of running the gamut of the emotions, and has revealed to us a young actress who ought to go far. She has youth, beauty, distinction, charm, intelligence and emotional power. She is the most exciting revelation our younger actresses have afforded us in several seasons.

"Young Madame Conti" is a court-room melodrama, adapted from the German of Bruno Frank by Hubert Griffith and Ben W. Levy. It tells the old story of the courtezan who, despite her trade, loves one man truly. She shoots her lover and is tried for the murder. The trick ending may or may not save the play as far as the public goes, this and the acting. The trial scene is very old and meretricious stuff indeed, unreal and false in sentiment, a sort of "Camille" as it might have been written in 1910. Yet acted as it is by Miss Cummings and by her associates, in particular Raymond Huntley as the counsel for the defense, Cameron Hall as the prosecutor, and William Dewhurst as the presiding judge, and admirably staged by Ben Levy, it affords some exciting moments. But as a whole it has great weaknesses both ethically and artistically. (At the Music Box.)

Miss Quis

"MISS QUIS" is a version of the Cinderella story—this time about a family servant who is left a house and a fortune by a New England small-town magnate. It is of interest chiefly because of its admirable characterizations of small-town types, and because of an excellent first act. Had Ward Morehouse been able to make the two last acts the equal of his first he would have produced one of the most delightful comedies of the year, but somehow the plot seemed to run away with him, and things didn't always quite tie up. The title part of Miss Quis is played by Peggy Wood with her accustomed skill, and James Rennie gives a really admirable portrait of the small-town gambler, an impersonation incisive, humorous, human. Jessie Royce Landis, who is one of the most capable and interesting of our younger actresses, makes one short appearance and makes us wish it had been longer. Mr. Morehouse knows his small-town people and knows how to write lifelike, pungent dialogue. At "Miss Quis" an audience may pass an evening of homely sentiment. (At the Henry Miller Theatre.)

GRENVILLE VERNON.

Captains Courageous

WITH no advance notice befitting its magnificence, Rudyard Kipling's immortalization of Gloucester's hardy and courageous fishing folk thrills us with fine seascapes and stirs us with the philosophy of the faith of a brawny though sentimental fisherman in the latent virtues hidden under the arrogance and selfishness of an obnoxiously spoiled son of a rich parent who even in childhood believes that money alone can buy dominion.

Dismissal from private school for bullying and an ocean trip en route to Europe with his distraught father set the stage for the drama of the boy's regeneration. He is washed overboard from the steamer and is picked up out of the sea by a fisherman working in a dory from the Gloucester schooner, which had just started a cruise. The crew refuse to turn to shore with the lad, who thus for three months lives an unpampered life among men to whom neither riches nor position mean anything, but to whom integrity and courage are everything. By the time the boy is restored to his parent at the end of the summer, he is, for the first time, a real lad with worthwhile ideas and a deep respect for his fellow man.

Freddie Bartholomew and Spencer Tracy are superb in their account of the evolution of the spoiled brat into a man, a lad who could only learn life's important lessons the hard way. Kipling kept life in his story, and so do its Hollywood narrators.

"Captains Courageous" has been given long and intensive attention before the cameras on the high seas. An interesting old Gloucester fishing schooner was brought to the Pacific from New England, to serve for the main scene of action. In addition, authentic settings were photographed on a 20,000 mile expedition that sailed from Newfoundland and the story's locale, off the Grand Banks, clear around to the East Indies, recording stormy seas and fishing fleets in action on the way, as well as the accidental near-wreck of an old schooner. As the crew fought to save the vessel, cameramen on adjacent boats obtained an astounding pictorial record of the struggle while their own crews stood by for a rescue.

For years Hollywood believed that Kipling's tale was one made for the screen, and producer and director have now taken full advantage of their opportunities. They have rendered Kipling masterfully in another art, giving effective realism to the magnificent sea scenes that the story could only suggest, and to all those pictures of ships that Kipling described.

JAMES P. CUNNINGHAM.

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Communications

"INTRUSIVE LAYMEN"

Long Island City, N. Y.

TO the Editor: In your "Week by Week" section, February 12 issue, in commenting on a statement about the trustee system in the Catholic Church, referred to in a recent issue of the *Catholic Transcript,* one reads: "We cull the following sentence concerning Archbishop Hughes: 'When ill-informed and intrusive laymen were claiming the right to govern the Catholic Church in the United States John Hughes took up the cause . . . and reduced to usurpers to silence.'"

Your treatment of the question of trusteeism which so deeply involves an essential element of the discipline of the Catholic Church, is too nebulous, loose, unscientific, unscholarly and inadequate to cover its just demands. Stripped of their exaggeration, misinterpretation and quibbling, your remarks create the impression:

That the *Catholic Transcript* is speaking irrelevantly and that it deserves castigation, though it be of the eau-de-cologne brand.

That Archbishop Hughes does not merit the praise which the *Transcript* accords him; that whatever he undertook or accomplished against the trusteeism of his day was superfluous, futile, indiscreet, or, perhaps, detrimental to the best interests of religion; that the long battle against trusteeism had been carried on by him alone, as a personal and pet diversion of a blundering and short-sighted martinet.

Whereas, though without much success, trusteeism, which a well-known historian calls "the greatest danger which threatened the organization of the Church," had already received the most earnest attention and had been accorded the strongest opposition of Archbishop Carroll, of Baltimore, Bishops Dubois and Connolly, of New York, and Bishops Egan and Kenrick, of Philadelphia.

That "even in the worst days of trusteeism" it was a perfectly innocent, helpful and holy thing.

Whereas, it had been condemned by several Popes, to wit, Pius VII, Leo XII and Gregory XVI, and by a Plenary Council of Baltimore, as a very pernicious thing.

That the trustees, themselves, were worthy Catholics.

Whereas, only after long hesitation and as a last resource, it was considered necessary to apply the severe remedy of excommunication and the drastic weapon of interdict for their correction.

That the trustees merely desired to be helpful to the Church and to forestall the errors of incompetent and benighted bishops and priests and contented themselves with "control over the finances of their parishes"; etc.

Whereas, they were so contemptible in the means which they employed to interfere with the canonical rights of the bishops and so hampered them in the lawful and necessary exercise of their duties, and so much terror did they spread, that four priests, who had been chosen to fill vacant bishoprics, begged to be excused, because they feared that they could not cope with the interference of our friends, the trustees. Evidently, they did not have a chin like John Hughes.

That the trustees exhibited competence in the management of church funds.

Whereas, in New York diocese, where their power was almost supreme, the mismanagement of the trustees was so flagrant that five out of eight parishes were forced into bankruptcy and their buildings were sold by the sheriff.

That the conduct of the bishops toward the trustees was "arbitrary."

Whereas, after the trustees had brought their case against the bishops before a civil tribunal, a decision against the trustees and in vindication of the bishops was handed down by Judge Addison, in the Court of Common Pleas of the state of Pennsylvania; which decision, incidentally, the trustees, poor citizens as well as poor Christians, bluntly refused to obey.

That there is now, if you please, a somewhat general dissatisfaction among the laity with the way in which the clergy are conducting the affairs of the Church, presumably due to the defeat and retirement of the trustee system, and a threatening disposition to have them turned over to the laity for refurbishment; that the grounds for this approximately minatory assumption are nothing less than the discovery that "there is round about us a manifest understanding of a need for a wider lay participation in active ecclesiastical life."

Whereas, every layman should have tucked away in his working modicum of theological lore, that in the Catholic system of legislation, binding on the consciences of the entire Catholic body, those "round about us" not excepted, there is a *de fide* distinction between the clergy and the laity, very useful in keeping overzealous fixers from putting the cart before the horse. The attention of "round about us" compromisers and even of editors of Catholic periodicals, when they appear to need it, should be gently drawn to the fact that in Protestant discipline this principle of our ecclesiastical polity is vehemently denied: that they refuse to admit that their bishops or ministers can exercise any jurisdiction over their consciences, it being historically true that they draw their unpalatable though significant appellation from the fact that they built their organization on revolt against the authority of the Church. A brief consideration of this item might quell the heretical leanings of some of the "round about us" group.

That instead, therefore, of remaining in the pew, the laity should promptly ascend to the sanctuary.

Whereas, any simple treatise on the Constitution of the Christian Church makes it as plain as day that "participation in active ecclesiastical life" is assigned to the clergy, while participation, as wide as you care to have it, in active Catholic life, is assigned to the faithful laity. This theory is well supported by sound tradition, as is evidenced in the conduct of Popes, bishops and priests, whose voices of protest rang out even from the helplessness of moldy dungeons, against kings and rulers of empires, who dared to assume the jurisdiction of the clergy.

That you lost sight of the much greater need on the part of the laity of an earnest effort to cooperate with

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the clergy in striving for a more intelligent grasp of Catholic principles concerning faith and morals and a more consistent and honest application of them to their daily conduct; of a sincere determination to provide their sons and daughters with a Christian education and less eagerness to have them marry wealth and social prestige, often enough, through the perilous gateway of heresy, schism or infidelity; of being seen more frequently at the confessional; of being more chary of their approving smiles for evil-doers, to gain material profit or social success; to be less inclined to blush for the Church or to express themselves as being embarrassed by her insistence on carrying out the responsibilities imposed upon her by Christ; to be ready to speak out, in public or in private, and lend the weight of their financial and social standing to succor the Church and to shield their religion from the misrepresentation of a hostile press or the opposition of inimical organizations; to cease denying Christ by their cowardly silence and open lack of sympathy with the aims of the Church for the dissemination of truth and the safeguarding of morals; to scruple at giving scandal and to be ready to give edification.

That the cessation of the trustee system is the reason for the "hard and distasteful work now wished upon pastors, rather than the hypocritical mentality and dishonest attitude of some affluent Catholics, who are willing to consume what they are unwilling to pay for and to see their pastors torn with distraction and anxiety, become broken in health and descend to untimely graves, because religious fraud can be indulged in with physical, mental, social and penal impunity and a refuge can be found in the transparent excuses spawned in dishonest Catholic consciences.

Finally, that the whole question of trusteeism should be turned into a "debate," as though any profit could be extracted or anything but disedification and added disloyalty could accrue through debating a gross perversion of ecclesiastical discipline, condemned as such by several Popes and by a Plenary Council of the Church.

If you had consulted the two historians and the priest on your editorial council, it might have preserved you from the impropriety and inaccuracy of many of your statements and the scandal of your misleading innuendoes. You missed a grand opportunity to raise THE COMMONWEAL in the estimation of its readers by being more complimentary to their supposed knowledge of church history and by having shown them how blessed a thing it is, for you and for them, that the trusteeism over whose lingering but final demise the *Catholic Transcript* rejoices and whose octopus claws were severed by that fearless, far-sighted, unselfish and valiant executive, John Hughes, has "Gone with the wind," God grant, never to return.

REV. EDWARD F. BROPHY.

Buffalo, N. Y.

TO the Editor: In re your excellent remarks on "Intrusive Laymen" in the February 12 number of THE COMMONWEAL, I may be permitted to add a few words of comment. The church I head has been through the troubles of the "fifties" and was interdicted five years on account of trustee troubles. A pious Jesuit missioner, Father Wenninger, finally made peace between the Bishop and the oldest parish of western New York. The system remained and is in force today, that a board of seven trustees manage the financial affairs of this parish. And they have not done so badly. Since 1868 deep peace has reigned.

There have been but three pastors here since that date, when the Civil War had just ended. All, including the present one, have realized that the parishioners are entitled to a bona-fide management of their temporal affairs. And this leaves the pastor out of many very unpleasant situations with carping parishioners.

Besides, let us not forget that the common law under which all churches in this state operate provides two lay trustees who are to have a voice in the running of the parish. Why make them rubber-stamps? Why ignore them? Why not live up to the law?

As you truly say, this should be part of the much-talked-about Catholic Action. Spain and Mexico have shown us that we cannot afford to neglect to keep our laymen near us, much more than we have done. How many of my confreres have people come to the rectory of their own free will to volunteer "service"?

AN IRREMOVABLE RECTOR.

THE BEAR PROTECTION SOCIETY

Mount Morris, Ill.

TO the Editor: With many other advocates of wild life conservation, I appreciate your note on Dr. William T. Hornaday in your issue of March 19, 1937. It is particularly appropriate that something of his story appear in THE COMMONWEAL because, like those who have made THE COMMONWEAL, he was a man who lived for his principles.

As editor of *Outdoor Life,* following the lead of my father, I cooperated with Dr. Hornaday for many years and, through the publicity we were able to give some of his causes, brought about a few changes in wild life conservation which, I think, may prove fifty years from now to justify the enmity of *status quo* groups which fought us at the time these wild life retrenchments were proposed.

It is swell to know that there are those on THE COMMONWEAL staff who know something about the tremendous importance of our conservation problems today.

Could I also as founder of the Bear Protection Society ask you to bear in mind that big game in the West is being starved out of existence by the U. S. Forests Service's policy on grazing of domestic animals, lower-grade ranchermen's attitude toward wild life, and politics in game administration?

The last grizzly bear was killed in California many years ago— a distinct sub-species wiped out. Five years ago there was one grizzly bear left in the state of New Mexico. Even in the East where the harmless little black bear is no more a menace than a good collie dog, he gets written up in the newspapers as a killer when some road-house proprietor ties him to a stake and he bites somebody's hand.

HARRY MCGUIRE.

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Books

White and Black

Interracial Justice, by John LaFarge. New York: America Press. $2.00.

THE THESIS of this book is stated on page 192: "The author believes, as do those priests who year after year have met and discussed many angles of this situation in the Conference on Negro Welfare, that the success of a program for eradicating race prejudice and establishing social justice is the answer to the majority of the spiritual and material difficulties of those who now labor for the good of the Negro in this country." Father LaFarge advances the solution of every problem connected with the status of the Negro in the United States with these two points in view. He gathers together the facts and the philosophy of race in all its bearings upon human rights and human dignity in such a way as to show that race prejudice has no justifiable foundation. His book is filled with compressed information on every point connected with racial prejudice and its removal. "Race," he says, "is a myth." Approved authorities are cited to show that the notion of race is too vague for any social use. The Negro is but one of the ethnic groups in the United States; the Negro-White problem is not unique; it is but one of a series of issues arising out of group relationship. It is not beyond solution; in fact, as a moral problem the Catholic Church cannot admit that it has no solution. To declare the race problem hopeless is to declare the bankruptcy of human society.

There are many astonishing statements in this book. For example, according to figures collected by the Institute of Social and Religious Research, there were only seventeen Catholic Churches out of 1,075 Negro churches of all bodies in seven typical Southern cities; in five Northern cities there were twelve Catholic Negro churches out of 1,027 of all bodies. The Negro is advancing in education; in 1930, 2,071 Negroes received a Bachelor's Degree in Arts and Sciences; in 1931, the total number of Negro graduates was about 18,000. No one knows the actual situation of the Negro both in the North and the South better than Father John LaFarge; he has not only worked for them but worked among them. He has spoken and written in their behalf and now with unflagging zeal he has put together this veritable charter of Negro rights on the firm foundation of that social justice for which he has so often pleaded and of which interracial justice is one important form.

No important fact or principle has been overlooked in this book. It contains the only worth-while bibliography from a Catholic source in existence. The Catholic Interracial Program which it proposes is one upon which every Catholic interested in human welfare can take a firm stand. It is impossible to be honest and disagree with him; above all it is impossible to be Catholic and call into question a single point which he advances. In the last analysis his thesis rests upon that higher justice, which is the justice of sanctification, the bond of charity which holds together all those whom Christ has redeemed. The

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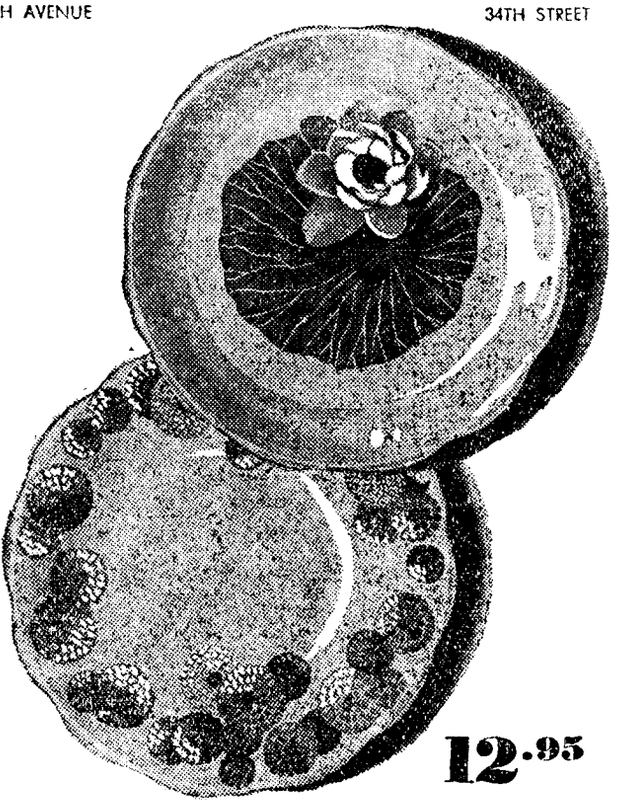

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Next Week

A NEW KNOWLEDGE OF MAN, by Alexis Carrel of the Rockefeller Foundation, author of "Man the Unknown," makes a strong plea for a coördination into a science of man of the fragmentary knowledge which has resulted from the over-specialization of our day. Dr. Carrel believes that synthetic thinking is of primary importance for the assimilation of modern scientific knowledge and that the solution of the problems of the day lies in the development of minds that are able to view man as a whole. . . . THE COURT AND THE PEOPLE, by Andrew F. Burke, is an argument supporting his contention that the President's Supreme Court proposal "is the most insidious assault that has been made upon the American form of government since the adoption of our Constitution." Mr. Burke goes back to the origins of the United States, gives statistics on the adverse decisions rendered by the Court and argues that an amendment is the most feasible way out of the administration's legislative difficulties. Mr. Burke also develops a Supreme Court proposal of his own. . . . In THE PLAYS ARE ON THE SHELVES Emmet Lavery, author of "The First Legion" and "Monsignor's Hour," declares there are plenty of plays on our library shelves to provide a repertoire for the Catholic Little Theater. He lists more than a score by American and European playwrights. Mr. Lavery believes that Catholics "must demonstrate, for one thing, that there is as much genuine excitement in good theatre as in Bingo!" THE AMERICAN PRESS AND SPAIN, by Michael Williams, is a discussion of the reliability of the news stories on the Spanish Civil War appearing in the daily press and a warning against accepting propaganda inspired by the leaders of the combatants.

fact that all life must be traced back to one source and the whole human family to one origin, the Christian teaching on the unity of mankind, the declaration of Saint Paul that we are all members of one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, bond or free, the whole doctrine of the Mystical Body, make it incumbent upon every right-thinking person to lay aside prejudice and give place to a justice which will abolish discriminations forbidden by our membershp in Christ.

Everyone who is working among Negroes and everyone interested in the welfare of our country should ponder carefully this book. It is no ordinary study; it is the product of experience, discussion and reflection extending over a period of years. Negroes and whites, Catholics and non-Catholics will find in it an exposition of all matters related to human welfare in so far as ethnic groups are concerned, superior to anything that has hitherto appeared. It is a book not merely to be read but to be studied. With its conclusions this reviewer most heartily agrees.

FRANCIS AUGUSTINE WALSH.

The West and an Artist

A Lamp on the Plains, by Paul Horgan. New York: Harper and Brothers. $2.50.

THAT its hero is the son of the chief figure in Paul Horgan's previous book, "Main Line West," will account for a slight dissatisfaction one may feel with "A Lamp on the Plains." The dissatisfaction, it should be said at once, is an "esthetic" one, a feeling that the book does not attain to the unity of an artistic whole, and it is not likely that the reader who goes to the book for entertainment—which the novel provides liberally—will experience it. For entertainment is the thrill evoked from page to page, while esthetic satisfaction is something that comes after a book is finished and from the contemplation of a whole. Mr. Horgan's entertainment is a result, indeed, of his artistry, his ability to arrange his material so that its main significance is given dramatic form; and this means that Mr. Horgan is an author whose original vision is not sacrificed for a popular "originality." A certain amount of stereotyped "originality" Mr. Horgan has not escaped: he subscribes to the convention of heavy emphasis on what is normally considered obscene, of which fiction should be sparing precisely because life is so abundant with it; he frequently abandons his story for, and confuses it with, a congested lyricism (which is the great vice of the modern novel, since the more it departs from telling a story for its own sake, the more must it fall back on retailing personal sensations; it is a matter of filling pages); and he is not free from a number of *clichés* of thought. Yet a *cliché* only gains its currency because of the large measure of truth and appositeness it contains, and Mr. Horgan revivifies the ones he uses by his consistent and moderate view.

His tale of adolescence in a New Mexico village covers familiar ground, but he throws a clear and steady light upon it, with the result that he reveals much not formerly seen in these frequented ways. He evokes brilliantly the hot and dusty reaches of the plains broken with the tin

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shadows cast by shacks of corrugated iron, and reveals with skill the corresponding contrasts in the human heart. He reveals least, perhaps, of his hero, the youth Daniel Milford; but the personalities of the leading characters in books of the autobiographical pattern are rarely sharp, because they are delimited only by the personality that encompasses the book. In the case of "A Lamp on the Plains" the encompassing personality is an attractive one; whether it is that of genius and whether its expression is a great contribution to American letters is a matter that seems in need of no immediate answer.

GEOFFREY STONE.

Round about Tokyo

The March of Japan, by Edgar Lajtha. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company. $3.00.

THERE are three salient first impressions around which every book on Japan is written. They are: the Japanese attitude toward sex-morality, militarism and economic-imperialism. The book's value depends on the distance the author can see below surface impressions and the degree his sacred realism permits acknowledgment of high romance as a motive force in a national life. This author is not afraid to acknowledge it, in this lively book. It is curious that the analogy is so rarely seen between the first two of these phenomena and the early culture of Christian Europe. Institutional sex-relationships peculiar to Japan are a survival of the Japanese ninth century's romantic age and identical with the troubadour period of Southern France. That is as essential to understanding of Japan as is the nature of the Japanese military establishment. By Christian analogy, the emperor is the Vice-Regent of God (the gods) on earth, responsible for his people, but not in any way to them—a notion very easy, surely, for Catholics to understand. The army and navy are his instruments for the protection of the imperium—as, in a sense, the Franks once were to the Popes. They stand, therefore, outside of the law. To some that is religious dogma, to others a convenient theory of government. Others oppose it. It is not possible to discuss it in western terms of militarism, which is simply an upset of balance between primary civil and subordinate military authority in western constitutional government. It is necessary, too, to understand the identity between Japanese knighthood in a warrior society and Christian chivalry in a less cultured but similar European period. No doubt that concept is changing under pressure of a materialistic industrialism, but it is still there in essence. The Japanese is perhaps the last chivalrous fighting man left in the world.

Japanese industrial-imperialism is a new thing. It is a purely western innovation. It has become necessary to Japanese existence but is in conflict with the essence of Japanese life. If it works successfully, it is when the Japanese puts his religion and his romance into it. If there is maladjustment, it is part of Japan's reluctantly cynical acceptance of our own divorce of Christian ethics from industrial society.

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In the Grass Country

The Sea of Grass, by Conrad Richter. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $1.25.

THIS is a short novel of New Mexico in the last days of the big cattlemen. Colonel Jim Brewton, when asked if it was true that his range from south to north ran a hundred miles or more, and west nearly to the Arizona line, "merely inclined his head." Apparently it was no exaggeration. Over all this area grew the wild native grass, excellent for beef as it once had been for buffalo, and then came the homesteaders—"nesters" they were called—who plowed it all up, and turned the sea of grass into a sea of dust.

As an account of life in the small towns of the grass country, and among the ranchers there, and of what rancher and nester thought about each other, this is a very good book. Mr. Richter knows all about the country and the period. He knows how to fill his picture with the things you want to see there. He writes well enough to make you feel that it is essential to know that the town saloon had a walnut bar, a sand box and a hanging lamp of brass.

But as a novelist he does not write well enough. There is a hollow vein in his book, evident from the first, and it is there as the result of several things. One may be the non-stop prose in which the book is written: a convenient prose for describing much in little space, but a monotonous prose, and one which leads into falsities—sins of exaggeration, chiefly.

Then the principal character, Colonel Brewton's wife, is not very convincing. Mr. Richter's favorite word for her is "alive"—one thing which she never becomes, probably because we are never given a demonstration of the charm and animation with which she conquers all beholders. Such fragments of her conversation as Mr. Richter makes available are certainly not impressive.

VINCENT ENGELS.

Immortal Lovers

Letters of Fanny Browne to Fanny Keats (1820-1824); *edited by Fred Edgcumbe, with a Preface by Maurice Buxton Forman. New York: Oxford University Press.* $3.00.

KEATS once dubbed her "silly"; and most of us since that time have done far worse. It came to be a commonplace of historical criticism that the girl to whom the young poet with a love for Elizabethan literature had given his heart was in no way worthy of the honor, and that if he had lived the best he could have hoped for was that Fanny would drown herself in some convenient stream. How incredibly romantic we have all been! When one compares what very nice people have written about Wordsworth's Annette (and not long ago, either) with the way he himself looked upon the subject, one feels that the Age of Romanticism reached its peak about 1928.

Therefore it will prove rather a shock to find out, from the long-secreted letters which kind fortune brought

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to the light wherein Mr. Edgcumbe has been privileged to examine them, that Fanny loved Keats and Keats loved Fanny with a rare, old-fashioned efficiency. About her there was nothing Katherine-Mansfieldish—she had more than enough sense to avoid the necessity for writing a certain kind of diary, and for leaving that diary exposed to public view; she possessed a fine taste, free of the dreadful alloy of conceit; and she was beautiful and lighthearted enough to be a joy at the breakfast table and a source of relief after poem writing. In short, these letters reveal the feminine product of a sturdy and companiable civilization, to which a good many of us can only refer half incredulously and in awe. When her period of mourning for Keats had ended (and it lasted a good while), she married a Spanish gentleman and kept her name out of the newspapers.

In short, the little book before us makes clearer than ever the poignant sadness of Keats's early death. If he had lived a hundred years later, the consumption which laid him low would doubtless have been easily cured. Fanny would have poured tea for him of afternoons, when he came in from dreaming under his inspirational apple-tree; and he might have turned to the writing of robust plays, sure to have put gusto and verve into the Georgian Age. Yet all that is beside the point. You will find this excellent little book worth reading, keeping and thinking about.

PAUL CROWLEY.

Some Good Ships

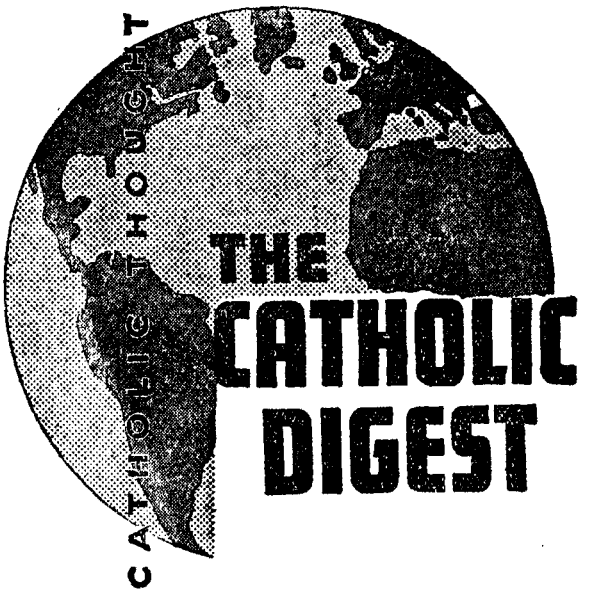
The Texas Navy, by Jim Dan Hill. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. $2.50.

TEXAS, the land of cowboys, lassos and coyotes, had a navy, and no amount of comparing it to the famed Swiss Navy can displace its important place in history. To Jim Dan Hill we are indebted for his pulling aside the curtain of time, by this interesting narrative of a sea power which gave us our coast line along the Gulf of Mexico.

Dispelling the fallacy of many historians of yesterday and today who have followed the accepted practise of giving Texas an ignoble rôle in the slavery issue of the pre-Civil War era, he gives us in its place a true picture of the oppression suffered by the early settlers at the hands of the Mexicans. The formation of the Texas government and its work in so far as it concerned the navy is brought to the fore. The rough shirt-sleeves diplomacy of those days makes a perfect background for this tale of iron men and wooden ships.

In describing the navy's offensive policy against Mexico he places the honor and glory of Santa Anna's defeat where it belongs, at the feet of Commodores H. L. Thompson and E. W. Moore, Captain J. D. Boylan and other sturdy sea-dogs, who with insufficient means at their command were able to keep at sea a navy that ensured control of the Gulf of Mexico. Mr. Hill has related all this in thoroughly authenticated historical episodes.

PHILIP H. WILLIAMS.



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Belloc vs. John Bull

An Essay on the Nature of Contemporary England, by Hilaire Belloc. New York: Sheed and Ward. $1.25.

IN THIS brief but stimulating treatise Mr. Belloc expounds in his customary forthright manner the admittedly limited formula that England is aristocratic in government, Protestant in morality and commercial in outlook. To those who maintain with the French that "England is in some way especially 'democratic,'" Mr. Belloc replies that, "on the contrary, the wealthy classes of other countries, particularly of the United States, find in England a refuge from egalitarian society." He weighs dispassionately and good-humoredly enough the advantages and disadvantages of government by the classes. In considering the negative and positive aspects of the nation's Protestant outlook Mr. Belloc has some very interesting things to say concerning the nation-wide influence of the King James Version of the Old Testament and the British sense of national superiority. The term "commercial" means for Belloc "organized for the increase of material wealth by exchange" as opposed to the more distributist notion of a peasant, yeoman, handicraft economy organized for the sake of production. His view of the consequences of the Dreyfus case may cause many a smile, but most of his intuitive flashes are truly illuminating.

An Outcast Speaks

An Exchange of Letters, by Thomas Mann. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $.50.

THOMAS MANN, Germany's foremost living novelist, was notified by the Nazi dean of the philosophical faculty of the University of Bonn that his honorary degree had been annulled. He thereupon replied, in a letter which has often been compared with Stevenson's epistle to Mr. Hyde: "I could not have lived and worked, I should have suffocated, had I not been able now and again to cleanse my heart, so to speak, to give from time to time free vent to my abysmal disgust at what was happening at home—the contemptible words and still more contemptible deeds."

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